Through the Wordsworth Country

Pictures by Harry Goodwin

Text by

William Knight

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THROUGH THE WORDSWORTH COUNTRY

A Companion to the Lake District

TRANSFERRED TO Metropolitan Special Coll.
LEWISHAM

BY

WILLIAM KNIGHT

Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews University; Author of "The Life of William Wordsworth"; Editor of his "Works," etc., etc.

WITH A FRONTISPIECE AFTER THE STATUE IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY, AND SIXTEEN FULL PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS, BY

HARRY GOODWIN

(SPECIALLY RE-ENGRAVED FOR THIS EDITION)

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CONTENTS.

NO.		PAGE
I.	COCKERMOUTH CASTLE	1
II.	WORDSWORTH'S BIRTHPLACE, COCKERMOUTH	7
III.	DAME TYSON'S COTTAGE	11
IV.	FLAG STREET, HAWKSHEAD	15
V.	THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, HAWKSHEAD	17
VI.	ESTHWAITE LAKE	23
VII.	THE MEETING-POINT OF TWO HIGHWAYS	28
VIII.	THE HAWKSHEAD BROOK	33
IX.	THE HAWKSHEAD MORNING WALK	39
X.	WINDERMERE	43
XI.	YEWDALE	47
XII.	GRASMERE	51
XIII.	DOVE COTTAGE	55
XIV.	DOVE COTTAGE ORCHARD	61
XV.	JOHN'S GROVE	69
XVI.	EMMA'S DELL	77
XVII.	THE ISLAND, GRASMERE	81
XVIII.	THE HEATH-CLAD ROCKS	85
XIX.	THE WISHING GATE	89
XX.	THE GLOW-WORM ROCK	97
XXI.	GREEN-HEAD GHYLL	103
XXII.	LOUGHRIGG TARN	111
XXIII.	THE CHURCHYARD, GRASMERE	119
XXIV.	LANCRIGG TERRACE	125

NO		PAGE
XXV.	GRISDALE TARN	131
XXVI.	HELVELLYN	141
XXVII.	AIRA FORCE	147
XXVIII.	BROTHERS' WATER	153
XXIX.	KIRKSTONE PASS	159
XXX.	DUNGEON GHYLL	167
XXXI.	BLEA TARN, FROM LINGMOOR	173
XXXII.	BLEA TARN, WITH THE LANGDALE PIKES	177
XXXIII.	STICKLE TARN	181
XXXIV.	THE SUMMER-HOUSE, RYDAL	187
XXXV.	RYDAL MOUNT	191
XXXVI.	NAB WELL	195
XXXVII.	DORA'S FIELD	197
XXXVIII.	A LEAFY BOWER, RYDAL	199
XXXIX.	THE OLD PATH FROM RYDAL TO GRASMERE	205
XL.	RYDAL WATER	213
XLI.	THE SWAN INN, GRASMERE	217
XLII.	WYTHEBURN	219
XLIII.	THE ROCK OF NAMES	221
XLIV.	DERWENT-WATER	225
XLV.	THE RIVER GRETA	227
XLVI.	SKIDDAW	231
XLVII.	SOUTHEY'S GRAVE	245
XLVIII.	THE BORROWDALE YEWS	251
XLIX.	THE LORTON YEW	255
L.	THE PILLAR ROCK	257
LI.	DUDDON VALLEY—COCKLEY BECK	261
LII.	THE FAERY CHASM	263
LIII.	NEAR THE PEN, DUDDON VALLEY	265
LIV.	DUDDON SANDS	267

PREFACE.

THE aim of this volume is sufficiently indicated in the following prospectus, which was issued at the close of the year 1886.

"THROUGH THE WORDSWORTH COUNTRY, by Harry Goodwin and Professor Knight. Under the above title a volume will be issued early in the spring of 1887, including those Poems of Wordsworth which contain topographical allusions to the *English Lake District*, with fifty-six engravings from drawings expressly made for this Work by Mr. Harry Goodwin, and letterpress by William Knight, Professor at the University of St. Andrews.

"The object of the book is to illustrate the scenes and localities most closely connected with Wordsworth's poetical work. Many of these scenes are undergoing changes, that in a few years will render their connexion with the poems obscure, and difficult to trace; and, it is with the hope of preserving some permanent record of what is still unchanged, that the present work has been undertaken.

"The following is a list of some of Mr. Goodwin's illustrations, which number fifty-six in all, and of which a sample is annexed hereto.

1. Wordsworth's Birthplace, Cockermouth.
2. Dame Tyson's Cottage.
3. The Grammar School, Hawkshead.
4. Flag Street, Hawkshead.
5. Esthwaite Lake.
6. Yewdale, Tilberthwaite.
7. Scene from *The Prelude*.
8. Loughrigg Tarn.
9. Dungeon Ghyll.
10. Stickle Tarn.
11. Blea Tarn.
12. Rydal Mount.
13. The Summer-house, Rydal.
14. 'Dora's Field.'
15. Rydal Water.
16. The Old Road between Rydal and Grasmere.
17. 'The Glow-worm Rock.'
18. 'The Heath-clad Rocks.'
19. 'The Wishing Gate.'
20. 'John's Grove.'
21. Grasmere.
22. The Island, Grasmere.
23. Wordsworth's Cottage, Town End.
24. The Churchyard, Grasmere.
25. 'Emma's Dell.'
26. Lancrigg Terrace.
27. Easdale Tarn.
28. The Swan Inn.
29. The Ruined Sheepfold at Greenhead Ghyll.
30. Dunmail Raise.
31. Wytheburn Church.
32. The 'Rock of Names.'
33. Grisdale Tarn.
34. Aira Force.
35. Brother's Water.
36. Kirkstone Pass.
37. Skiddaw.
38. Derwentwater.
39. Southey's Grave.
40. The Borrowdale Yews.

Etc., etc., etc."

Reference must be made, however, to a somewhat similar book, written ten years ago by the author of the letter-

press of this volume, and published by Mr. David Douglas, Edinburgh. The title of that book was *The English Lake District, as interpreted in the Poems of Wordsworth;* and its aim, as stated in the Preface, was to be "a guide to the Poems, rather than to the district; and to the district only in so far as it is reflected in, and interpreted by the Poems,"—the poems themselves being regarded as the chief "Guide" to a country which they have made classic ground.

I may add that Mr. Goodwin's drawings in the present work were originally taken as illustrations of *The English Lake District*, and inserted in the pages of his copy of that book, as he drew them during successive years. They appeared to me so admirable, that I hoped Mr. Goodwin would be induced to reproduce them, independently of an accompanying letterpress. They seemed of much greater value than any prose description could be, as illustrative of a district of England, the characteristic features of which are being rapidly changed by the introduction of machinery, railways, water-works, etc., and which posterity might in vain wish to recover from oblivion.

These Drawings are—along with the Poems they illustrate—almost self-interpretative; and to those who know and love the English Lakes and Mountains, they

render a lengthened commentary superfluous, if not impertinent. The aim I have therefore kept in view, in my part of the work, has been twofold. *First*, to be as terse and simple as I possibly could; saying just enough to point out the relation of Mr. Goodwin's drawing to the poem or the place, and no more. Occasionally however, during the passage of the proofs through the press, I have been led to add a few descriptive sentences from S. T. Coleridge, Southey, Lamb, Wordsworth or his sister. *Second*, not to traverse precisely the same ground as that which was covered in my earlier work. It will be seen that the order adopted, the poems quoted, and the descriptions of place differ in many ways. The fundamental idea of the books is different. The former was meant to be a prose guide to the localities mentioned in the Poems, and therefore many were referred to which are omitted here. In the present, the Drawings being the real guide, the letterpress is, in the main, an explanation of them.

Were I to presume to offer advice to one visiting the English Lake District for the first time—or revisiting it a second time with a view to trace the connexion between the poems of Wordsworth and the places described in them—I would say, let him approach it by Windermere,

(and long may it be ere the railway can bring him any farther!) From Windermere let him go by Bowness, not neglecting its Church as he passes—as some things will be seen in it that are alluded to in *The Excursion*,—and by the Ferry, to Hawkshead. The three islands of Windermere, described in *The Prelude*, will be noted,

> "The selected bourne
> Was now an Island musical with birds
> That sang and ceased not; now a Sister Isle
> Beneath the oaks' umbrageous covert, sown
> With lilies of the valley like a field;
> And now a third small Island, where survived
> In solitude the ruins of a shrine
> Once to Our Lady dedicate."

On one of these islands Wordsworth's schoolfellow, Robert Greenwood, "the Ministrel of the Troop," blew his flute alone upon the rock; and on another of them William Raincock, of Rayrigg, used at evening to send his

> "mimic hootings to the silent owls,
> That they might answer him."

Not far off, on the Bowness side of the Ferry, stood the inn mentioned in *The Prelude*,

> "Midway on long Winander's eastern shore,
> Within the crescent of a pleasant bay."

Passing on from "the station" on the western side of the lake, to Hawkshead, by the hamlet of Sawrey, many places on the road are associated with Wordsworth. There is the

> "long ascent,
> Where the road's watery surface, to the top
> Of the sharp rising glittered to the moon."

There is the spot where grew the Yew Tree, "near the lake of Esthwaite, on a desolate part of the shore," and where the poet wrote the "Lines, left upon a Seat, etc." The village of Hawkshead is soon visible, where he says—

> "turning round
> I saw the snow-white church upon her hill
> Sit like a thronèd Lady sending out
> A gracious look all over her domain";

and the Lake itself, round which the boy Wordsworth used to walk in summer mornings before schooltime, or across which he rowed his boat alone at night, and saw the peak of Wetherlam grew larger in the darkness, and where in winter he skated with his companions, so magnificently described in *The Prelude.*

In the quaint village of Hawkshead, Dame Tyson's House, where the boy resided during his schooltime, first claims notice; next the "famous brook" in Flag Street,

"the unruly child of mountain birth"; then the Square of the small market village, the centre of the sports of the schoolboys; and the School itself, where Wordsworth's name is still to be seen—cut by himself with penknife on one of the primitive benches,—and where he was taught by his revered master, William Taylor (the "Matthew" of the poems). To identify the scene of the memorable "Morning Walk," after the night spent at a rustic dance, when "vows were made for him," and to fix the "meeting-point of two highways," where he watched for the steeds to take him to Penrith at Christmas, is more difficult; but both give large scope for imagination, and wise conjecture. Crossing the ridge that divides Hawkshead from Coniston, the Tilberthwaite valley is seen to the right, where the boy used to harry the ravens' nests, and pursue his other pastimes; and from the village of Coniston the valley of the Duddon may be leisurely explored, the series of sonnets addressed to the stream—from its source at Wrynose to the sea at Duddon Sands—being the best guide.

From Coniston, the Wordsworth student should go on to Ambleside, and from Ambleside visit the Langdales, either passing Dungeon Ghyll Force, and proceeding to Blea Tarn by the ordinary route, or ascending Lingmoor

to look down on the Tarn, "the liquid pool that glittered in the sun," described in *The Excursion*. The cottage in which the Solitary was supposed to live remains, and the "cool recess," the "semicirque of turf-clad ground," the rock like "a stranded ship, with keel upturned," the "fragment like an altar," etc., can all be recognised. The two peaks, "the lusty twins" of Langdale, are visible over the ridge to the north. Here, as well as at Grasmere, *The Excursion* is the best of guide-books.

Returning to Ambleside, it is usual to push on to Rydal and Grasmere; but this should be postponed. Let the Wordsworth student first take the Kirkstone road over to Ullswater, noting the stone near the summit, which "gives to this savage pass its name." Descending to *Brother's Water*, the bridge—where the lines bearing that name were composed—is crossed; and proceeding down the eastern shore of the lake, Gowbarrow Park, where the daffodils were seen in myriads—those daffodils which suggested the poem beginning "I wandered lonely as a cloud," and one of the finest passages of prose writing in Dorothy Wordsworth's journal—may be visited, as also Lyulph's Tower and Aira Force.

Returning again to Ambleside, the road to Rydal is full of associations with the Poet of the district—the

Mount itself, the terrace-walks, the summer-house, Dora's Field, Nab Scar, the falls in the grounds of Rydal Hall, the upper path under Nab Scar to Grasmere, the lake below it, the road by Hartley Coleridge's cottage at the Nab, passing the "Glow-worm Rock" to the right, and the "Heath-clad Rocks" to the left, on to the "Wishing Gate," and "John's Grove," till Grasmere is visible. From Rydal quarry the upper path may be taken, by the Leech-gatherer's Pool on White Moss Common, under Heughfolds, thence descending to the village, past Dove Cottage, where every turn of the road or winding path, every fresh grouping of rock and crag, of vale mountain and river, brings out "some new thing" connected with the glorious spring time, or the late autumn of the poet's work.

At Grasmere we reach the very centre round which all the associations with Wordsworth cluster. It will require some leisure to exhaust what can be done by the student, who wishes to localize his poetry, and trace out its allusions. If Dove Cottage or Grasmere churchyard is our centre point, there is Allan Bank to the west (where the most of *The Excursion* was written, and where Coleridge stayed many months with Wordsworth); there is Easdale beck with "Emma's Dell," and Lancrigg House

and Terrace (where the cantos of *The Prelude* were murmured out aloud, and dictated to the poet's willing scribes, his wife and sister); there is Helm Crag, described in *The Waggoner*, "Joanna's Rock," "the Parsonage" of *The Excursion*, Dunmail Raise, and Fairfield, with Grisdale Tarn, the "parting place" of the brothers William and John Wordsworth, to the north; to the east, there is Greenhead Ghyll, with the ruins of "Michael's sheep-fold" in it, and the height of Stone Arthur,—

> "The last that parleys with the setting sun";

to the south, the Lake itself, with "Point Rash Judgment," the Island, the terraces of Loughrigg, Red Bank, Hammerscar, and the Wyke, below Silver Howe. The old Saxon Church of Grasmere itself, with its solemn associations—the "Church" of *The Excursion*,—being prominent, and the Churchyard, with its "moss-grown wall," near the poet's last resting place. There is the

> "long stone seat, fixed in the church-yard wall,
> Part shaded by cool sycamore, and part
> Offering a sunny resting place,"

whence may be heard, from Wray Ghyll Force,

> "the soft voice
> Of yon white torrent falling down the rock,"

and may be seen to the north "the long ascent of Dunmail Raise," the road that,—

> "Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine."

At Grasmere, let the Wordsworth student rest for many days; and from this centre, in the late spring or autumn (May and October are the best months) he may study those places which the genius of the poet of "the inward eye" has consecrated for posterity. The special teaching of this poet, and its "healing power," can be realized nowhere else so perfectly; but, let me add, they will cease to be realizable even there, unless the vale of Grasmere remains a place of seclusion, unviolated by the roar of machinery and the din of traffic. The blasting of quarries, and the works of the water-engineers, have already done it grievous wrong,—a wrong which time,

> "softening and concealing,
> And busy with the hand of healing,"

may in part atone; but if ever the steam-car enters the vale of Grasmere, the lover of repose will have to seek it elsewhere, and the charm of that indescribable region will be only a memory of the past.

From Grasmere the Wordsworth student naturally moves on to Keswick, over the ridge dividing the shires

of Westmorland and Cumberland. At the top of the col, he sees to the left

> "that pile of stones,
> Heaped over brave King Dunmail's bones."

Descending toward Thirlmere, he passes

> "Wytheburn's modest house of prayer,
> As lowly as the lowliest dwelling";

and not far from it, at the foot and on the western flank of Helvellyn, the old Cherry Tree Inn; and next—at a spot soon to be sunk under the waters of a Manchester reservoir—the "Rock of Names," the trysting place of the poets of Grasmere and Keswick, with its initials W. W., M. H., D. W., S. T. C., J. W., and S. H.; the "Raven Crag" and "Ghimmer Crag," of *The Waggoner;* St. John's Vale; and so on to Keswick. At Keswick the associations are with Wordsworth's early residence at Windybrow farm, and his relations to Raisely Calvert, his visits to Coleridge and Southey at Greta Hall, his descriptions of Skiddaw, of St. Herbert's Island, and Lodore. From Keswick the birthplace of the poet at Cockermouth may be visited, and the places around it —Lorton, etc.—referred to in the poems; while, in Borrowdale the Yew Tree grove under Glaramara, and

in Ennerdale the spot associated with *The Brothers*, are easily accessible.

The Lake District may doubtless be entered first at Keswick, and the poet's birthplace—with Borrowdale, etc.—be explored, before Grasmere is visited; but it will be found every way better to begin, as I suggest, with Windermere, Hawkshead, and Ambleside; and to advance from these, by Rydal and Grasmere, to the north.

Wordsworth's own *Description of the Scenery of the Lakes*, can now be obtained in a cheap form; and it ought to be taken to the district by every lover of the poems. It is occasionally referred to in the following pages.

It is upon Mr. Goodwin's Drawings, however, that the entire merit of this book rests; and I venture to think that the "Wordsworth Country" will be imperishably associated with one, who has reproduced its features and made them permanent, in so delightful a manner.

WILLIAM KNIGHT.

THROUGH THE WORDSWORTH COUNTRY.

No. I.

COCKERMOUTH CASTLE.

WORDSWORTH was born at Cockermouth, where his father was land agent to Sir James Lowther—afterwards Earl of Lonsdale—on April 7th, 1770; and there he spent the early years of childhood. In his autobiographical poem, *The Prelude*, he makes many allusions to the Town, to the old House, and the Garden with the river Derwent behind it, and to the surrounding scenery. Thus, in the first book, he says:

> Was it for this
> That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved
> To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
> And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,
> And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice
> That flowed along my dreams? For this, didst thou,

O Derwent! winding among grassy holms
Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,
Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts
To more than infant softness, giving me
Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind
A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm
That Nature breathes among the hills and groves?
When he had left the mountains and received
On his smooth breast the shadow of those towers
That yet survive, a shattered monument
Of feudal sway, the bright blue river passed
Along the margin of our terrace-walk;
A tempting playmate whom we dearly loved.
Oh, many a time have I, a five years' child,
In a small mill-race severed from his stream,
Made one long bathing of a summer's day;
Basked in the sun, and plunged, and basked again,
Alternate, all a summer's day, or scoured
The sandy fields, leaping through flowery groves
Of yellow ragwort; or when rock and hill,
The woods, and distant Skiddaw's lofty height,
Were bronzed with deepest radiance, stood alone
Beneath the sky, as if I had been born
On Indian plains, and from my mother's hut

COCKERMOUTH CASTLE. [*Face p.* 2

Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport
A naked savage, in the thunder shower.

The Prelude, Book I.

The first of Mr. Goodwin's drawings is a sketch of the ruins of Cockermouth Castle, the "shattered monument of feudal sway." The "bright blue river"—the Derwent—passes to the right

"Along the margin of our terrace-walk,"

which is below the wind-swept tree in the drawing, and at the foot of the garden of the old mansion in which Wordsworth was born. (This terrace-walk is the main feature in the second drawing of the poet's birthplace.) The view is to the east, and up the river, from a point almost opposite the raised terrace.

Beyond the ruined towers and the rainbow will be seen the "windings of a public way." This is now a footpath, but in Wordsworth's time it was the high road over the "Watch Hill" to Isel, a hamlet on the Derwent, three and a half miles from Cockermouth. Wordsworth refers to it in the following passage in the thirteenth book of *The Prelude:*

Who doth not love to follow with his eye
The windings of a public way? the sight,

Familiar object as it is, hath wrought
On my imagination since the morn
Of childhood, when a disappearing line,
One daily present to my eyes, that crossed
The naked summit of a far off hill
Beyond the limits that my feet had trod,
Was like an invitation into space
Boundless, or guide into eternity.

The Prelude, Book XIII.

The *Address from the Spirit of Cockermouth Castle* may be recalled, in connexion with this drawing; and the sonnet *To the River Derwent*, though it refers to the infant stream, the "glory of the vale" of Langstrath under Glaramara, may have been composed at Keswick, and contains allusions to the scenes of the poet's infancy. The former sonnet may be quoted in full.

ADDRESS FROM THE SPIRIT OF COCKERMOUTH CASTLE.

"THOU look'st upon me, and dost fondly think,
Poet! that, stricken as both are by years,
We, differing once so much, are now compeers,
Prepared, when each has stood his time, to sink
Into the dust. Erewhile a sterner link

United us ; when thou, in boyish play,
Entering my dungeon, didst become a prey
To soul-appalling darkness. Not a blink
Of light was there ;—and thus did I, thy tutor,
Make thy young thoughts acquainted with the grave ;
While thou wert chasing the wing'd butterfly
Through my green courts ; or climbing, a bold suitor,
Up to the flowers whose golden progeny
Still round my shattered brow in beauty wave."

No. II.

WORDSWORTH'S BIRTHPLACE, COCKERMOUTH.

THIS drawing combines a view of the Terrace-Walk already referred to, the Garden, and the back of the old House in which Wordsworth's father lived, with the river Derwent in the foreground. It is taken from the north bank of the river, looking almost due south. That Cockermouth garden, with its "leafy shade," is frequently referred to in the poems. Here it was that

> "My sister Emmeline and I
> Together chased the butterfly."

Here that, as children, the brother and sister found out *The Sparrow's Nest*, with such wondering delight.

It is thus that Wordsworth himself describes it, in a note to a poem written in 1801 in the orchard at Town End, Grasmere. "At the end of the garden of my father's house at Cockermouth was a high terrace that commanded a fine view of the river Derwent and Cockermouth Castle.

This was our favourite playground. The terrace wall, a low one, was covered with closely clipt privet and roses, which gave an almost impervious shelter to birds who built their nests there. The latter of these stanzas alludes to one of those nests."

THE SPARROW'S NEST.

BEHOLD, within the leafy shade,
Those bright blue eggs together laid!
On me the chance-discovered sight
Gleamed like a vision of delight.
I started—seeming to espy
The home and sheltered bed,
The Sparrow's dwelling, which, hard by
My Father's house, in wet or dry
My sister Emmeline and I
Together visited.

She looked at it and seemed to fear it;
Dreading, tho' wishing to be near it:
Such heart was in her, being then
A little Prattler among men.
The Blessing of my later years
Was with me when a boy:

WORDSWORTH'S BIRTH-PLACE. [*Face p.* 8.

She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
And humble cares, and delicate fears;
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears;
And love, and thought, and joy.

TO A BUTTERFLY.

The Fenwick note to this poem is as follows: "Written in the orchard, Town End, Grasmere. My sister and I were parted almost immediately after the death of our mother, who died in 1778, both being very young." In Dorothy Wordsworth's "Grasmere Journal," she writes, under date March 14th, 1802: "While we were at breakfast, W. wrote the poem *To a Butterfly*. The thought came upon him, as we were talking about the pleasure we both always felt at the sight of a butterfly. I told him that I used to chase them a little, but that I was afraid of brushing the dust off their wings, and did not catch them. Mr. Sympson came in just as he was finishing the poem. After he was gone, I wrote it down, and the other poem, and read them all over to him. . . William began to try to alter the Butterfly, and tired himself."

STAY near me—do not take thy flight!
A little longer stay in sight!
Much converse do I find in thee,
Historian of my infancy!
Float near me: do not yet depart!
Dead times revive in thee:
Thou bring'st, gay creature as thou art!
A solemn image to my heart,
My Father's family!

Oh! pleasant, pleasant were the days,
The time when, in our childish plays,
My sister Emmeline and I
Together chased the butterfly!
A very hunter did I rush
Upon the prey:—with leaps and springs
I followed on from brake to bush;
But she, God love her! feared to brush
The dust from off its wings.

No. III.

DAME TYSON'S COTTAGE.

DURING his school-days at Hawkshead Wordsworth lived in the cottage of Dame Tyson. This cottage, in the old market town, still remains externally very much as it was in 1778, and is little changed in the interior, although its surroundings are much altered. It is a humble dwelling of two storeys; the floor of the basement flat, paved with the blue flags of Coniston slate, is probably just as it was in Wordsworth's time. On the second flat there are two bedrooms to the front, one of which must have been Wordsworth's. The cottage faces south-west, and Wordsworth's room was probably that on the proper left, with the smaller of the two windows. He speaks of it thus,

> Ye lowly cottages wherein we dwelt,
> A ministration of your own was yours;
> Can I forget you, being as you were
> So beautiful among the pleasant fields

In which ye stood? or can I here forget
The plain and seemly countenance with which
Ye dealt out your plain comforts? Yet had ye
Delights and exultations of your own.

The Prelude, Book I.

Again he refers to

That lowly bed whence I had heard the wind
Roar, and the rain beat hard; where I so oft
Had lain awake on summer nights to watch
The moon in splendour couched among the leaves
Of a tall ash, that near our cottage stood;
Had watched her with fixed eyes while to and fro
In the dark summit of the waving tree
She rocked with every impulse of the breeze.

The Prelude, Book IV.

This ash tree is gone, but its locality is not difficult to trace. It grew on the proper right front of the cottage, where an outhouse is now built.

There are four places where Wordsworth lived in the Lake Country, more distinctively associated with him than any others, and more interesting—in connexion with his poetic work—than Racedown in Dorset, or

Alfoxden in Somerset, or Coleorton in Leicestershire. They are Tyson's Cottage at Hawkshead, Dove Cottage at Grasmere, Allan Bank, and Rydal Mount. Tyson's house has special interest, in its rustic lowliness and simplicity, as his home during those years which he describes as the "fair seed-time of his soul"; and it is perhaps easier for us to realize the boy Wordsworth at Hawkshead *as it now is*, than to imagine the man Wordsworth at Dove Cottage or at Rydal, as they now are. Hawkshead is out of the stereotyped track of the tourists, it is less "modernized" than Bowness, Coniston, Ambleside, or Grasmere; and although a great deal is gone that existed in Wordsworth's time, and we search in vain for the "stone seat" under the "dark pine," and the "ash tree," the Yew Seat near Esthwaite Water, and the "rude mass of native rock" in the "village square,"—and have our puzzles about the "famous brook," and the "fountain," and the "morning walk," and the "meeting-point of two highways," there remain a score of things and places identifiable by minute traces in detail, and others realizable by imagination. It does not greatly signify that the precise spot of the memorable Morning Walk is unascertainable, while several places suit it well; and as for the famous Skating Scene on Esthwaite water, when he

cut across the reflex of a star
That fled, and flying still before him, gleamed
Upon the glassy plain,

it can be realized in almost any one of the "silent bays" of the lake. It is easy for the sympathetic student of the poems to follow the boy in his tenth year, holding, as he tells us,

unconscious intercourse with beauty
Old as creation,

while he

felt
Gleams like the flashing of a shield;—the earth
And common face of Nature spake to him
Remarkable things.

No. IV.

FLAG STREET, HAWKSHEAD.

THIS is perhaps the most interesting street, or alley, in the quaintly picturesque village of Hawkshead; but its interest is chiefly due to the description—in *The Prelude*—of the "famous brook," once an "unruly child of mountain birth" (see drawing No. VIII.), but which

> soon as he was boxed
> Within our garden, found himself at once,
> As if by trick insidious and unkind,
> Stripped of his voice, and left to dimple down
> (Without an effort and without a will)
> A channel framed by man's officious care.

There has been doubt, and there still is controversy, as to the identity of this brook. Dr. Cradock wrote thus of it: "Persons have visited the cottage without discovering it; and yet it is not forty yards distant, and is still exactly as described. On the opposite side of the lane already referred to, a few steps above the cottage, is a narrow passage through some new stone buildings. On

emerging from this, you meet a garden, the farther side of which is bounded by the brook, confined on both sides by large flags, and also covered by flags of the same Coniston formation, through the interstices of which you may see and hear the stream running freely. The upper flags are now used as a footpath, and lead by another passage back into the village. No doubt the garden has been reduced in size by the use of that part of it fronting the lane for building purposes. The stream, before it enters the area of buildings and garden, is open by the lane side, and seemingly comes from the hills to the westward. The large flags are extremely hard and durable, and it is probable that the very flags which paved the channel in Wordsworth's time may be doing the same duty still."

There is another spot, a few hundred yards above this one, in the course of the brook, at a place now called Walker Ground, where the streamlet is also "boxed within a garden" and "stripped of its voice" for some distance; and it is said that boys attending the school in the end of the last century used to board there. But it seems more probable that the "garden" with its "crowd of things about its narrow precincts all beloved," was near Dame Tyson's house.

FLAG STREET, HAWKSHEAD. [*Face p.* 16.

No. V.

THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, HAWKSHEAD.

THE Hawkshead Grammar School—founded by Edwin Sandys, Archbishop of York, in 1585—is a humble building of two storeys, and remains very much as it was in the end of the last century. Many of the old benches are well cut with the names and initials of successive scholars; and that of "W. Wordsworth" is amongst them—now covered by a small framework of glass to preserve it from injury. Four masters taught this school in Wordsworth's time; but for the third—the Rev. William Taylor—he entertained a very special regard. He died while the poet was at school; and before his death, he called the upper boys to his room—Wordsworth amongst them—and blessed them, while he said farewell. It is to him that reference is made in the following lines:

ADDRESS TO THE SCHOLARS OF THE VILLAGE SCHOOL OF ——.

1798.

I COME, ye little noisy crew,
Not long your pastime to prevent;

I heard the blessing which to you
Our common Friend and Father sent.
I kissed his cheek before he died ;
And when his breath was fled,
I raised, while kneeling by his side,
His hand :—it dropped like lead.
Your hands, dear Little-ones, do all
That can be done, will never fall
Like his till they are dead.
By day or night, blow foul or fair,
Ne'er will the best of all your train
Play with the locks of his white hair
Or stand between his knees again.

Here did he sit confined for hours ;
But he could see the woods and plains,
Could hear the wind and mark the showers
Come streaming down the streaming panes.
Now stretched beneath his grass-green mound
He rests a prisoner of the ground.
He loved the breathing air,
He loved the sun, but if it rise
Or set, to him where now he lies,
Brings not a moment's care.

Alas! what idle words; but take
The Dirge which for our Master's sake
And yours, love prompted me to make.
The rhymes so homely in attire
With learned ears may ill agree,
But chanted by your Orphan Quire,
Will make a touching melody.

Taylor is also characterized in other Poems, *The Two April Mornings*, *The Fountain*, and the lines quoted below. Note that as Wordsworth called his sister "Emma," and his daughter "Laura," he calls his old master, William Taylor, "Matthew."

In the school of —— is a tablet, on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the names of the several persons who have been schoolmasters there since the foundation of the school, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite one of those names the author wrote the following lines:

If nature, for a favourite child
In thee hath tempered so her clay,
That every hour thy heart runs wild,
Yet never once doth go astray,

Read o'er these lines ; and then review
This tablet, that thus humbly rears
In such diversity of hue
Its history of two hundred years.

When through this little wreck of fame,
Cipher and syllable ! thine eye
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed :
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool :
Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness ;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up—
He felt with spirit so profound.

Thou soul of God's best earthly mould!
Thou happy soul! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee?

A very touching reference to Taylor is made in *The Prelude* (Book X.), when, eight years after his death, Wordsworth, riding over Ulverston Sands, turned aside to see his grave in Cartmel churchyard.

The grammar school of Hawkshead has recently been adorned by scrolls with inscriptions taken from Wordsworth's poems; such as—

The child is father to the man,
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each in natural piety.

Books, we know,
Are a substantial world, both pure and good.

And a proposal was made a couple of years ago, at a

meeting of the Wordsworth Society—to which its president for the time being, the late Lord Houghton, was the first subscriber—to erect a bust of Wordsworth in this school, in memory of the most remarkable boy ever educated within it. It is to be hoped that this proposal will yet be realized.

It was the custom of the senior boys in Wordsworth's time to add a volume to the school library when they left Hawkshead, and to inscribe their name upon the book, when they presented it. I have sought in vain for one with Wordsworth's name, or that of any of his brothers. It would be interesting to know what book he selected, if he followed the school custom.

No. VI

ESTHWAITE LAKE.

THE whole of the Hawkshead district is associated with Wordsworth, and the

> "first virgin passion of his soul
> Communing with this glorious universe."
>
> *The Prelude*, Book I.

In the fifth book of *The Prelude* he tells us :

> Well do I call to mind the very week
> When I was first entrusted to the care
> Of that sweet Valley ; when its paths, its shores,
> And brooks were like a dream of novelty
> To my half-infant thoughts

As to Esthwaite Lake, he tells us that his

> morning walks
> Were early ;—oft before the hours of school
> I travelled round our little lake, five miles
> Of pleasant wandering.
>
> *The Prelude*, Book II.

Again:

Nor seldom did I lift our cottage latch
Far earlier, ere one smoke-wreath had risen
From human dwelling, or the vernal thrush
Was audible; and sate among the woods
Alone upon some jutting eminence,
At the first gleam of dawn-light, when the Vale,
Yet slumbering, lay in utter solitude.

The Prelude, Book II.

But the late evening and the night had their revelations to him as well as the dawn.

I would stand
If the night blackened with a coming storm,
Beneath some rock, listening to notes that are
The ghostly language of the ancient earth,
Or make their dim abode in distant winds.

The Prelude, Book II.

The sixth drawing is an illustration of a scene and an experience, described in the first book of *The Prelude*, the precise locality of which is easily identified.

One summer evening (led by her) I found
A little boat tied to a willow tree

Within a rocky cove, its usual home.
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on ;
Leaving behind her still, on either side,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,
The horizon's utmost boundary ; far above
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.
She was an elfin pinnace ; lustily
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat
Went heaving through the water like a swan ;
When, from behind that craggy steep till then
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,
And growing still in stature the grim shape
Towered up between me and the stars, and still,

For so it seemed, with purpose of its own
And measured motion like a living thing,
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,
And through the silent water stole my way
Back to the covert of the willow tree ;
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,—
And through the meadows homeward went, in grave
And serious mood ; but after I had seen
That spectacle, for many days, my brain
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense
Of unknown modes of being ; o'er my thoughts
There hung a darkness, call it solitude
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes
Remained, no pleasant images of trees,
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields ;
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

The Prelude, Book I.

Any one walking from Hawkshead by the road to Sawrey, and keeping to the margin of the lake on its eastern shore, can realize the very spot to which this refers The

"craggy ridge
Till then the horizon's bound"

is the ridge of Ironkeld, while the

"huge peak, black and huge,
As if with voluntary power instinct,"

is the summit of Wetherlam.

It was on Esthwaite Lake also that the Hawkshead schoolboys had their glorious winter pastime—so magnificently described in *The Prelude*—when the voices of Nature, its colours, forms, and motions, were heard and felt through all the sport, and blending with the intense zest of the physical exercise, were at once a revelation and a delight.

No. VII.

THE MEETING-POINT OF TWO HIGHWAYS.

One Christmas-time,
On the glad eve of its dear holidays,
Feverish, and tired, and restless, I went forth
Into the fields, impatient for the sight
Of those led palfreys that should bear us home;
My brothers and myself. There rose a crag,
That, from the meeting-point of two highways,
Ascending, overlooked them both, far stretched;
Thither, uncertain on which road to fix
My expectation, thither I repaired,
Scout-like, and gained the summit; 'twas a day
Tempestuous, dark, and wild, and on the grass
I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall;
Upon my right hand couched a single sheep,
Upon my left a blasted hawthorn stood;
With those companions at my side, I watched,
Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist

Gave intermitting prospect of the copse
And plain beneath. Ere we to school returned,—
That dreary time,—ere we had been ten days
Sojourners in my father's house, he died,
And I and my three brothers, orphans then,
Followed his body to the grave. The event,
With all the sorrow that it brought, appeared
A chastisement; and when I called to mind
That day so lately past, when from the crag
I looked in such anxiety of hope;
With trite reflections of morality,
Yet in the deepest passion, I bowed low
To God, who thus corrected my desires;
And, afterwards, the wind and sleety rain,
And all the business of the elements,
The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,
And the bleak music from that old stone wall,
The noise of wood and water, and the mist
That on the line of each of those two roads
Advanced in such indisputable shapes;
All these were kindred spectacles and sounds
To which I oft repaired, and thence would drink,
As at a fountain; and on winter nights,
Down to this very time, when storm and rain

Beat on my roof, or, haply, at noon-day,
While in a grove I walk, whose lofty trees,
Laden with summer's thickest foliage, rock
In a strong wind, some working of the spirit,
Some inward agitations thence are brought,
Whate'er their office, whether to beguile
Thoughts over busy in the course they took,
Or animate an hour of vacant ease.

The Prelude, Book XII.

This is one of the most characteristic of Wordsworth's allusions to the scenes of his boyhood. The year was evidently 1783, but the locality is difficult to determine. It may have been one or other of two places. Wordsworth's father died at Penrith, and it was there that the sons went for their Christmas holiday. The road from Penrith to Hawkshead was by Kirkstone Pass and Ambleside; and the "led palfreys" sent to take the boys home would certainly come through the latter town. There are only two roads from Ambleside to Hawkshead, which meet at a point about a mile north of Hawkshead, called in the ordnance map "Outgate." The eastern road is now chiefly used by carriages, being less hilly and better made than the western one. The latter would be

quite as convenient as the former would be for horses. If one walks out from Hawkshead village to the place where the two roads separate at "Outgate," and then ascends the ridge between them, he will find several places from which he could overlook *both* roads "far stretched," were the view not now intercepted by numerous plantations. (The latter are of comparatively recent growth.) Dr. Cradock—to whom I am indebted for this, and for many other suggestions as to localities alluded to by Wordsworth—thinks that "a point, marked on the map as 'High Crag,' between the two roads, and about three-quarters of a mile from their point of divergence, answers the description as well as any other. It may be nearly two miles from Hawkshead, a distance of which an active, eager schoolboy would think nothing. The 'blasted hawthorn' and the 'naked wall' are probably things of the past as much as the 'single sheep.'"

Doubtless this may be the spot,—a green, rocky knoll with a steep face to the north, where a quarry is wrought, and with a plantation to the east. It commands a view of both roads. The other possible place is a crag, not a quarter of a mile from Outgate, a little to the right of the place where the two roads divide. A low wall runs up across it to the top, dividing a plantation of oak, hazel,

and ash from the firs that crown the summit. These firs, which are larch and spruce, seem all of this century. The top of the crag may have been bare when Wordsworth lived at Hawkshead. But at the foot of the path along the dividing wall there are a few (probably older) trees; and a solitary walk beneath them, at noon or dusk, is almost as suggestive to the imagination as repose under the yews of Borrowdale, listening to "the mountain flood" on Glaramara. There one may still hear the bleak music from the old stone wall, and "the noise of wood and water"; while the loud dry wind whistles through the underwood, or moans amid the fir trees of the Crag, on the summit of which there is "a blasted hawthorn" tree. It may be difficult now to determine the precise spot to which the boy Wordsworth climbed on that eventful day —afterwards so significant to him, and from the events of which, he says, he drank "as at a fountain,"—but I think it must have been to one or other of these two crags.

No. VIII.

THE HAWKSHEAD BROOK.

THE FOUNTAIN.

A CONVERSATION.

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew!" said I, "let us match
This water's pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch
That suits a summer's noon;

Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made!"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree;
And thus the dear old Man replied,
The grey-haired man of glee:

"No check, no stay, this Streamlet fears;
How merrily it goes!
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink!

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay:
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free:

But we are pressed by heavy laws;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own;
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my Friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me ; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

" Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains !
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains ;

And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I'll be a son to thee ! "
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
" Alas ! that cannot be."

We rose up from the fountain-side ;
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide ;
And through the wood we went ;

And ere we came to Leonard's rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

The above poem is a sequel to that on *Matthew* and *The Two April Mornings;* all of them referring in part to the Rev. William Taylor, the "village schoolmaster" of Hawkshead. But the "Matthew" of these poems is an idealized picture of Taylor, as the "Wanderer" of *The Excursion* was an idealization of Patrick, the Scotch pedlar. The streamlet described in this poem, and in others, is doubtless the famous Hawkshead beck,—not as it is seen in the Flag Street, or "boxed" within the old dame's garden, but the "unruly child of mountain birth," as it comes down from the uplands above the village, a streamlet by the banks of which Wordsworth must have wandered a hundred times in those Hawkshead days. His description of it,—

> "No check, no stay, this streamlet fears;
> How merrily it goes!
> 'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
> And flow as now it flows,"

suggests the refrain of Tennyson's idyl *The Brook*,—

> "For men may come, and men may go,
> But I go on for ever."

But the various MS. readings which Wordsworth gave

of this stanza on the margin of a copy of his poems are so interesting as to warrant quotation.

" Down to the Vale with eager speed
Behold this streamlet run,
From subterranean bondage freed,
And glittering in the sun."

Down to the Vale with eager speed,
Behold this streamlet run,
From subterranean darkness freed,
A pleasant course to run."

" Down to the Vale this streamlet hies
Look, how it seems to run,
As if 'twere pleased with summer skies
And glad to meet the sun.

No guide it needs, no dark it fears,
How merrily it goes !
'Twill murmur on a thousand years
And flow as now it flows."

" Down towards the Vale with eager speed
Behold this streamlet run,
As if 'twere pleased with summer skies,
And glad to meet the sun."

At last he struck his pen through all these emendations, and adhered to the original version in the text.

No. IX.

THE HAWKSHEAD MORNING WALK.

ONE of the most remarkable passages in *The Prelude* describes the effect produced by the calm and splendour of the dawn, after a night spent in "dancing, gaiety, and mirth," and the dedication of his life that followed.

'Mid a throng
Of maids and youths, old men, and matrons staid
A medley of all tempers, I had passed
The night in dancing, gaiety, and mirth,
With din of instruments and shuffling feet,
And glancing forms, and tapers glittering,
And unaimed prattle flying up and down ;
Spirits upon the stretch, and here and there
Slight shocks of young love-liking interspersed,
Whose transient pleasure mounted to the head,
And tingled through the veins. Ere we retired,
The cock had crowed, and now the eastern sky
Was kindling, not unseen, from humble copse

And open field, through which the pathway wound,
And homeward led my steps. Magnificent
The morning rose, in memorable pomp,
Glorious as ere I had beheld—in front,
The sea lay laughing at a distance ; near,
The solid mountains shone, bright as the clouds,
Grain-tinctured, drenched in empyrean light ;
And in the meadows and the lower grounds
Was all the sweetness of a common dawn—
Dews, vapours, and the melody of birds,
And labourers going forth to till the fields.
Ah ! need I say, dear Friend ! that to the brim
My heart was full : I made no vows, but vows
Were then made for me ; bond unknown to me
Was given, that I should be, else sinning greatly,
A dedicated Spirit. On I walked
In thankful blessedness, which yet survives.

It is difficult to fix the precise locality of this memorable morning walk. A view of the sea could only be obtained in that district, as Dr. Cradock pointed out, at a considerable elevation, and the phrase "*in front*, the sea lay laughing at a distance," if taken literally, would imply that Wordsworth walked in a southerly direction towards

Hawkshead. There are several mountain farms behind Ironkeld, and also in Yewdale, in any of which the night may have been spent. Certainly the point of view which he describes, and where he paused, and "vows were made" for him, was somewhere about the Hawse, between Coniston and Hawkshead. He may have been looking down into the vale of Esthwaite, or into that of Yewdale; or across to the Latterbarrow heights, when in "the meadows and the lower grounds" he saw "the sweetness of a common dawn." The mention of the "labourers going forth to till the fields," suggests the arable valley of Yewdale, rather than the other; while "the solid mountains" were most probably Coniston Old Man and Wetherlam. The sea in distance must have been across the Coniston valley, and beyond the Duddon estuary.

No. X.

WINDERMERE.

WINDERMERE is frequently alluded to, and described by Wordsworth, especially in *The Prelude.*

When summer came,
Our pastime was, on bright half-holidays,
To sweep along the plain of Windermere
With rival oars; and the selected bourne
Was now an Island musical with birds
That sang and ceased not; now a Sister Isle
Beneath the oaks' umbrageous covert, sown
With lilies of the valley like a field;
And now a third small Island, where survived
In solitude the ruins of a shrine
Once to Our Lady dedicate, and served
Daily with chaunted rites. In such a race
So ended, disappointment could be none,
Uneasiness, or pain, or jealousy:
We rested in the shade, all pleased alike,
Conquered and conqueror. Thus the pride of strength,

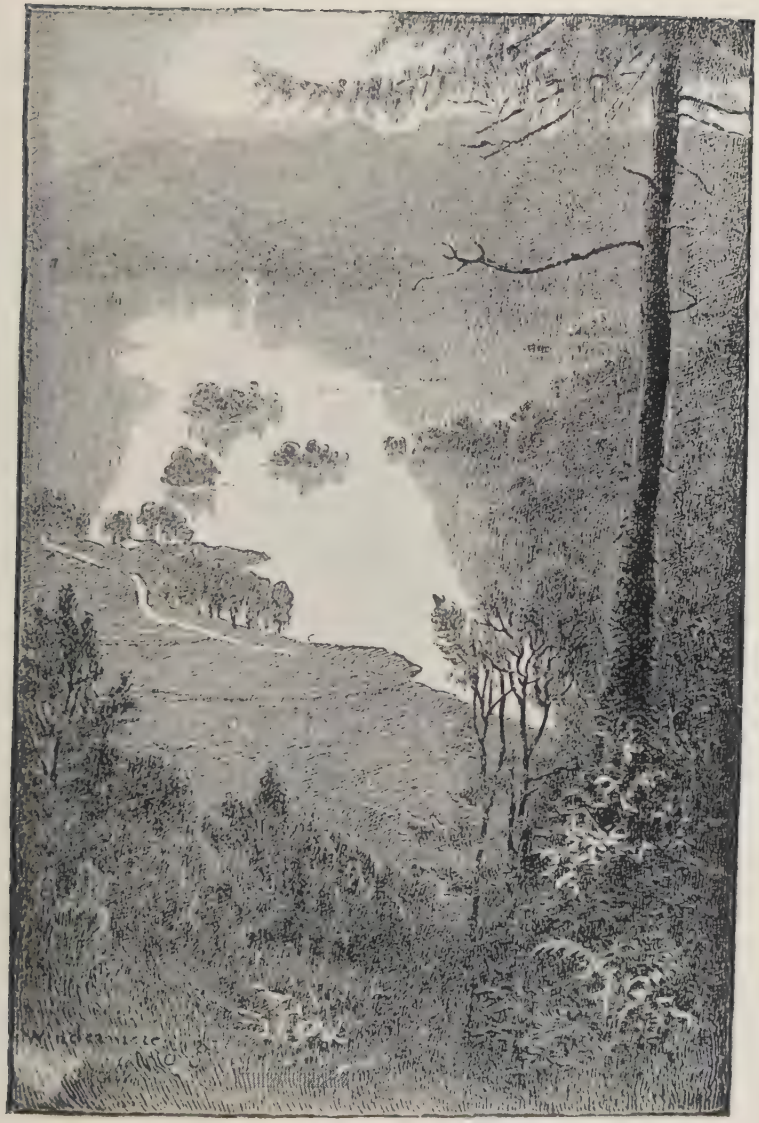
> And the vainglory of superior skill,
> Were tempered; thus was gradually produced
> A quiet independence of the heart;
> And to my Friend who knows me I may add,
> Fearless of blame, that hence for future days
> Ensued a diffidence and modesty,
> And I was taught to feel, perhaps too much,
> The self-sufficing power of Solitude.
>
> *The Prelude*, Book II.

These islands are easily identified. The island "musical with birds that sang and ceased not," was either House Holme or Thomson's Holme. The "sister isle," that was sown "with lilies of the valley like a field," was Belle Isle, where the flowers still bloom beneath the "oaks' umbrageous covert." The third small island, with its ruins of a shrine "once to Our Lady dedicate," is still called Lady Holme.

This lake, the ferry near Bowness, the inn

> "Midway on long Winander's eastern shore,
> Within the crescent of a pleasant bay,"

the road from Windermere to Hawkshead by Sawrey, were all associated with Wordsworth's summer vacations when an undergraduate at Cambridge, and his visits to



WINDERMERE, [*Face p.* 44.

the home of his boyhood. The whole can be seen at a glance from the top of Orrest Head. Mr. Goodwin's view of the lake is taken from the western shore, looking towards the Claife Heights between Windermere and Esthwaite. Perhaps Wordsworth's finest poem referring to Windermere is that on the boy William Raincook, of Rayrigg, one of his schoolfellows, who died before his twelfth year.

THERE WAS A BOY.

THERE was a Boy ; ye knew him well, ye cliffs
And islands of Winander !—many a time,
At evening, when the earliest stars began
To move along the edges of the hills,
Rising or setting, would he stand alone,
Beneath the trees, or by the glimmering lake ;
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,
That they might answer him.—And they would shout
Across the watery vale, and shout again,
Responsive to his call,—with quivering peals,
And long halloos, and screams, and echoes loud
Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse wild

Of jocund din! And, when there came a pause
Of silence such as baffled his best skill:
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise
Has carried far into his heart the voice
Of mountain-torrents; or the visible scene
Would enter unawares into his mind
With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven received
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates, and died
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.
Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale
Where he was born and bred: the churchyard hangs
Upon a slope above the village school;
And, through that churchyard when my way has led
On summer evenings, I believe, that there
A long half-hour together I have stood
Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies!

It was of this poem, and especially of the phrase, "a gentle shock of mild surprise," that Coleridge said, that had he met with it whilst traversing the deserts of Arabia, he would have immediately shouted out "Wordsworth."

No. XI.

YEWDALE.

FAIR seed-time had my soul, and I grew up
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear:
Much favoured in my birthplace, and no less
In that beloved Vale to which erelong
We were transplanted—there were we let loose
For sports of wider range. Ere I had told
Ten birthdays, when among the mountain slopes
Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had snapped
The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy
With store of springes o'er my shoulder hung
To range the open heights where woodcocks run
Along the smooth green turf. Through half the night,
Scudding away from snare to snare, I plied
That anxious visitation;—moon and stars
Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,
And seemed to be a trouble to the peace
That dwelt among them. Sometimes it befell

In these night wanderings, that a strong desire
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird
Which was the captive of another's toil
Became my prey; and when the deed was done
I heard among the solitary hills
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds
Of undistinguishable motion, steps
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

Nor less when spring had warmed the cultured Vale,
Moved we as plunderers where the mother-bird
Had in high places built her lodge; though mean
Our object and inglorious, yet the end
Was not ignoble. Oh! when I have hung
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock
But ill sustained, and almost (so it seemed)
Suspended by the blast that blew amain,
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that time
While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,
With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind
Blow through my ear! the sky seemed not a sky
Of earth—and with what motion moved the clouds!

The Prelude, Book I.

The "open heights" where the woodcocks ran "along the smooth green turf," were those between Esthwaite and Coniston; but the scene of the youthful exploits in harrying ravens' nests, when the boy Wordsworth hung "by knots of grass and half-inch fissures in the slippery rock," must refer to the Holme Fells above Yewdale. The Yew tree, which gave its name to this dale, still survives, and is represented in the drawing. The Holme Fells are beyond; and here (as Wordsworth describes it in his *Epistle to Sir George Beaumont*) is the

> "rock too steep for man to tread,
> Where, sheltered from the north and bleak north-west,
> Aloft the raven hangs a visible nest,
> Fearless of all assaults that would her brood molest."

Note the accuracy of the allusion to the time when the breath of frosty wind had "snapped the last autumnal crocus." This usually happens in that district about mid October.

No. XII.

GRASMERE.

THE drawing No. XII. is a view of the lake and valley of Grasmere from the slopes of Silver How, near Red Bank. Near the centre is the church described in *The Excursion.* The house to the left is Allan Bank, where Wordsworth lived from the spring of 1807 till 1821, and where the larger part of *The Excursion* was written. Beyond it, over the wood, is Lancrigg, where (on the terrace-walk) he dictated much of *The Prelude.* Above it is Helm Crag, celebrated in *The Waggoner.* The path over Dunmail Raise is to the left, and on the flank of Fairfield, where up "the heathy waste," it

"Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine."

Dove Cottage, the poet's home during the seven years of his poetic prime, is to the right of the picture, a little way beyond its margin. "Point Rash Judgment" juts out on the waters of the mere, at the lower right corner, while Blencathara is seen beyond the

"Easy outlet of the vale."

in the northern distance. The "parsonage" of *The Excursion* is still to be seen to the east of the road up Dunmail Raise, while Greenhead Ghyll, with "Michael's" ruined sheepfold, is underneath Stone Arthur, the "eminence" to the right,

"The last that parleys with the setting sun."

These are but a few of the spots consecrated by the genius of Wordsworth that come within the compass of this single sketch. Emma's Dell, Joanna's Rock, the Wyke Cottage, and a multitude of others are there; while John's Grove, the Wishing Gate, the Two Heath-clad Rocks, and White Moss Common, with the Leech-gatherer's pool, are close at hand, to the right of the drawing.

Perhaps the most general description of Grasmere which Wordsworth has given is that contained in a still unpublished canto of *The Recluse*, entitled "Home at Grasmere," an extract from which is to be found in the "Memoirs" of the poet, by the late Bishop of Lincoln.

On Nature's invitation do I come,
By Reason sanctioned. Can the choice mislead,
That made the calmest, fairest spot on earth,
With all its unappropriated good,

GRASMERE. [*Face p.* 52.

My own, and not mine only, for with me,
Entrenched—say rather, peacefully embowered—
Under yon orchard, in yon humble cot,
A younger orphan of a home extinct,
The only daughter of my parents dwells?
Ay, think on that, my heart, and cease to stir;
Pause upon that, and let the breathing frame
No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.
Oh, if such silence be not thanks to God
For what hath been bestowed, then where, where then
Shall gratitude find rest? Mine eyes did ne'er
Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind
Take pleasure in the midst of happy thoughts,
But either she, whom now I have, who now
Divides with me that loved abode, was there,
Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps turned,
Her voice was like a hidden bird that sang;
The thought of her was like a flash of light,
Or an unseen companionship, a breath
Or fragrance independent of the wind.
In all my goings, in the new and old
Of all my meditations, and in this
Favourite of all, in this the most of all.

* * * * *

Embrace me then, ye hills, and close me in.
Now in the clear and open day I feel
Your guardianship : I take it to my heart ;
'Tis like the solemn shelter of the night.
But I would call thee beautiful ; for mild,
And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art,
Dear valley, having in thy face a smile,
Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou art pleased,
Pleased with thy crags and woody steeps, thy lake,
Its one green island, and its winding shores,
The multitude of little rocky hills,
Thy church, and cottages of mountain stone,
Clustered like stars some few, but single most,
And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,
Or glancing at each other cheerful looks,
Like separated stars with clouds between.

The whole of this unpublished canto of *The Recluse* will appear in the extended Biography of Wordsworth now nearly ready for the press.

No. XIII.

DOVE COTTAGE.

WORDSWORTH came to this cottage in the last week of last century. It still remains much as it was when he entered it, although its surroundings are greatly changed. It had once been a public house, bearing the sign of a dove and olive bough. Hence the name "Dove Cottage." De Quincey—who lived in it after Wordsworth went to Rydal—thus describes it, as he saw it in the summer of 1807: "A white cottage with two yew trees breaking the glare of its white walls." (These yew trees still stand on the eastern side of the cottage.) "A little semi-vestibule between two doors prefaced the entrance into what might be considered the principal room of the cottage. It was an oblong square, not above eight and a half feet high, sixteen feet long, and twelve broad, wainscotted from floor to ceiling with dark polished oak, slightly embellished with carving. One window there was, a perfect and unpretending cottage window, with little diamond panes, embowered at almost

every season of the year with roses, and in the summer and autumn with a profusion of jasmine and other shrubs. . . . I was ushered up a little flight of stairs, fourteen in all, to a little drawing-room, or whatever the reader chooses to call it. Wordsworth himself has described the fireplace of this room as his

'Half-kitchen and half-parlour fire.'

It was not fully seven feet six inches high, and in other respects pretty nearly of the same dimensions as the rustic hall below. There was however, in a small room, a library of perhaps 300 volumes, which seemed to consecrate the room as the poet's study and composing room, and which occasionally it was. But far oftener he both studied, as I found, and composed on the high-road."—*Recollections of the Lakes*, pp. 130, 137.

In this cottage Wordsworth, his wife, and sister received Coleridge as a frequent guest; and the numerous references to his visits,—coming over from Keswick unexpectedly, or by invitation,—with their conversations, and doings, as recorded by Dorothy Wordsworth in her journal, are of singular interest.

There are many allusions to Dove Cottage in the poems; the majority however refer more to the orchard

garden behind the house, than to the cottage itself. The four sonnets entitled *Personal Talk* (which were written in the house) are associated with it perhaps as intimately as any others.

PERSONAL TALK.

I.

I AM not one who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal talk,—
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
Or neighbours, daily, weekly, in my sight:
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,
These all wear out of me, like Forms, with chalk,
Painted on rich men's floors for one feast-night.
Better than such discourse doth silence long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire;
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

II.

"YET life," you say, "is life; we have seen and see,
And with a living pleasure we describe;

And fits of sprightly malice do but bribe
The languid mind into activity.
Sound sense, and love itself, and mirth and glee
Are fostered by the comment and the gibe."
Even be it so: yet still among your tribe,
Our daily world's true Worldlings, rank not me!
Children are blest, and powerful; their world lies
More justly balanced; partly at their feet,
And part far from them:—sweetest melodies
Are those that are by distance made more sweet;
Whose mind is but the mind of his own eyes,
He is a Slave; the meanest we can meet!

III.

WINGS have we,—and as far as we can go
We may find pleasure: wilderness and wood,
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.
Dreams, books, are each a world; and books, we know,
Are a substantial world, both pure and good:
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
There find I personal themes, a plenteous store;

Matter wherein right voluble I am,
To which I listen with a ready ear;
Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear—
The gentle lady married to the Moor;
And heavenly Una, with her milk-white lamb.

IV.

NOR can I not believe but that hereby
Great gains are mine; for thus I live remote
From evil-speaking; rancour, never sought,
Comes to me not; malignant truth, or lie.
Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous thought:
And thus from day to day my little boat
Rocks in its harbour, lodging peaceably.
Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!
Oh! might my name be numbered among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

To give an adequate account of the days of poetic work and high discourse within this Grasmere Cottage,

the meetings with Coleridge and others, the "plain living and high thinking," of these years—1800 to 1807—a large part of Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal would have to be quoted. It is enough to point out here that, in Dove Cottage, and the surrounding locality—in the orchard garden, or on the roads and the heights, or the groves and valleys around, or by the banks of the Rothay—the best part of Wordsworth's work was done in these years of his "poetic prime."

No. XIV.

DOVE COTTAGE ORCHARD.

THE orchard-ground behind Dove Cottage is somewhat, though not greatly, altered since Wordsworth's time. It slopes upwards to a terrace, where an arbour or moss-hut was built by Wordsworth; in which he murmured out, and wrote, or dictated many of his poems. Below the terrace is the Well which supplied the cottage with water, where large-leaved primroses still grow, doubtless the successors of those planted by the poet and his sister. When Wordsworth left Grasmere, in 1802, to be married to Mary Hutchinson at Stockton-on-Tees, he wrote the following temporary *Farewell* to his cottage at Town End:

A FAREWELL.

FAREWELL, thou little Nook of mountain-ground,
Thou rocky corner in the lowest stair
Of that magnificent temple which doth bound
One side of our whole vale with grandeur rare;

Sweet garden-orchard, eminently fair,
The loveliest spot that man hath ever found,
Farewell!—we leave thee to Heaven's peaceful care,
Thee, and the Cottage which thou dost surround.

Our boat is safely anchored by the shore,
And there will safely ride when we are gone;
The flowering shrubs that deck our humble door
Will prosper, though untended and alone:
Fields, goods, and far-off chattels we have none:
These narrow bounds contain our private store
Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine upon;
Here are they in our sight—we have no more.

Sunshine and shower be with you, bud and bell!
For two months now in vain we shall be sought;
We leave you here in solitude to dwell
With these our latest gifts of tender thought;
Thou, like the morning, in thy saffron coat,
Bright gowan, and marsh-marigold, farewell!
Whom from the borders of the Lake we brought,
And placed together near our rocky Well.

We go for One to whom ye will be dear;
And she will prize this Bower, this Indian shed,

Our own contrivance, Building without peer!
—A gentle Maid, whose heart is lowly bred,
Whose pleasures are in wild fields gatherèd,
With joyousness, and with a thoughtful cheer,
Will come to you; to you herself will wed;
And love the blessed life that we lead here.

Dear spot! which we have watched with tender heed,
Bringing thee chosen plants and blossoms blown
Among the distant mountains, flower and weed,
Which thou hast taken to thee as thy own,
Making all kindness registered and known;
Thou for our sakes, though Nature's child indeed,
Fair in thyself and beautiful alone,
Hast taken gifts which thou dost little need.

And O most constant, yet most fickle Place,
That hast thy wayward moods, as thou dost show
To them who look not daily on thy face;
Who, being loved, in love no bounds dost know,
And say'st, when we forsake thee, "Let them go!"
Thou easy-hearted Thing, with thy wild race
Of weeds and flowers, till we return be slow,
And travel with the year at a soft pace.

Help us to tell Her tales of years gone by,
And this sweet spring, the best beloved and best;
Joy will be flown in its mortality:
Something must stay to tell us of the rest.
Here, thronged with primroses, the steep rock's breast
Glittered at evening like a starry sky;
And in this bush our sparrow built her nest,
Of which I sang one song that will not die.

O happy Garden! whose seclusion deep
Hath been so friendly to industrious hours;
And to soft slumbers, that did gently steep
Our spirits, carrying with them dreams of flowers,
And wild notes warbled among leafy bowers;
Two burning months let summer overleap,
And, coming back with Her who will be ours,
Into thy bosom we again shall creep.

Above the well, in the rocks which diversify the slope, are the daffodils which the poet and his sister brought to their "garden ground"; but the Christmas roses, which they planted near the well, were removed to the eastern side of the ground, where their successors still flourish luxuriantly. The moss-hut is gone, and a stone

seat now takes its place; but the hidden brook may still be heard singing its under-song, as of yore.

> "If you listen, all is still,
> Save a little neighbouring rill,
> That from out the rocky ground
> Strikes a solitary sound."

The "flowering shrubs," and the "rocky well" still exist, in the "little nook of mountain ground"; and the "steep rock's breast" is "thronged with primroses" in spring, although the "Bower" is a thing of the past.

The poem most descriptive of this orchard, or garden ground, however, is *The Green Linnet;* and it is as true to the spirit of the place in 1887 as it was eighty years ago.

THE GREEN LINNET.

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head
With brightest sunshine round me spread
Of spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequestered nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard-seat!
And birds and flowers once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest:
Hail to Thee, far above the rest
In joy of voice and pinion!
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,
Presiding Spirit here to-day,
Dost lead the revels of the May;
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
Art sole in thy employment:
A Life, a Presence like the Air,
Scattering thy gladness without care,
Too blest with any one to pair;
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
Yet seeming still to hover;
There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings

Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
A brother of the dancing leaves;
Then flits, and from the cottage-eaves
Pours forth his song in gushes;
As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
While fluttering in the bushes.

Again—though two years earlier—he wrote:

TO A BUTTERFLY.

I'VE watch'd you now a full half-hour,
Self-poised upon that yellow flower:
And, little Butterfly! indeed
I know not if you sleep or feed.
How motionless!—not frozen seas
More motionless! and then
What joy awaits you, when the breeze
Hath found you out among the trees,
And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard-ground is ours;
My trees they are, my Sister's flowers.
Here rest your wings when they are weary;
Here lodge as in a sanctuary!
Come often to us, fear no wrong;
Sit near us on the bough!
We'll talk of sunshine and of song,
And summer days, when we were young;
Sweet childish days, that were as long
As twenty days are now.

Other poems associated with this orchard are *The Redbreast Chasing the Butterfly*, *The Kitten and the Falling Leaves*, and the *Lines* (describing Coleridge and himself) *Written in his Pocket Copy of Thomson's "Castle of Indolence."*

No. XV.

JOHN'S GROVE.

THIS fir-grove is between White Moss Common and the old road from Grasmere to Rydal, past the "Wishing Gate." It is close to the gate, and above it, to the east. The "single beech-tree,"—in which was the thrush's nest, mentioned in the poem,—was pointed out by Wordsworth to friends, in the year 1847. The view from the grove is no longer what it used to be, owing to the growth of larch plantations in the foreground: but still—

> "the steep
> Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful lake,
> And one green island, gleam between the stems
> Of the dark firs."

These firs are greatly reduced in number since Wordsworth's time, although a few still survive. Several of his poems were murmured out in this grove, especially one in memory of his brother John, which he included in the group of "Poems on the Naming of Places." This poem tells its own tale so simply that commentary is needless.

WHEN, to the attractions of the busy world,
Preferring studious leisure, I had chosen
A habitation in this peaceful Vale,
Sharp season followed of continual storm
In deepest winter; and, from week to week,
Pathway, and lane, and public road, were clogged
With frequent showers of snow. Upon a hill
At a short distance from my cottage stands
A stately Fir-grove, whither I was wont
To hasten, for I found, beneath the roof
Of that perennial shade, a cloistral place
Of refuge, with an unencumbered floor.
Here, in safe covert, on the shallow snow,
And, sometimes, on a speck of visible earth,
The redbreast near me hopped; nor was I loath
To sympathise with vulgar coppice birds
That, for protection from the nipping blast,
Hither repaired.—A single beech-tree grew
Within this grove of firs; and, on the fork
Of that one beech, appeared a thrush's nest;
A last year's nest, conspicuously built
At such small elevation from the ground
As gave sure sign that they, who in that house
Of nature and of love had made their home

Amid the fir-trees, all the summer long
Dwelt in a tranquil spot. And oftentimes,
A few sheep, stragglers from some mountain-flock,
Would watch my motions with suspicious stare,
From the remotest outskirts of the grove,—
Some nook where they had made their final stand,
Huddling together from two fears—the fear
Of me, and of the storm. Full many an hour
Here did I lose. But in this grove the trees
Had been so thickly planted, and had thriven
In such perplexed and intricate array,
That vainly did I seek, beneath their stems,
A length of open space, where to and fro
My feet might move without concern or care;
And, baffled thus, though earth from day to day
Was fettered, and the air by storm disturbed,
I ceased the shelter to frequent,—and prized,
Less than I wished to prize, that calm recess.

The snows dissolved, and genial Spring returned
To clothe the fields with verdure. Other haunts
Meanwhile were mine; till, one bright April day
By chance retiring from the glare of noon
To this forsaken covert, there I found

A hoary pathway traced between the trees,
And winding on with such an easy line
Along a natural opening, that I stood
Much wondering how I could have sought in vain
For what was now so obvious. To abide,
For an allotted interval of ease,
Beneath my cottage roof, had gladly come
From the wild sea a cherished Visitant,
And with the sight of this same path—begun,
Begun and ended, in the shady grove,
Pleasant conviction flashed upon my mind
That, to this opportune recess allured,
He had surveyed it with a finer eye,
A heart more wakeful; and had worn the track
By pacing here, unwearied and alone,
In that habitual restlessness of foot
That haunts the sailor measuring o'er and o'er
His short domain upon the vessel's deck,
While she is travelling through the dreary sea.

When thou hadst quitted Esthwaite's pleasant shore
And taken thy first leave of those green hills
And rocks that were the playground of thy youth,
Year followed year, my Brother! and we two,

Conversing not, knew little in what mould
Each other's minds were fashioned ; and at length,
When once again we met in Grasmere Vale,
Between us there was little other bond
Than common feelings of fraternal love.
But thou, a School-boy, to the sea hadst carried
Undying recollections : Nature there
Was with thee ; she, who loved us both, she still
Was with thee ; and even so didst thou become
A *silent* Poet ; from the solitude
Of the vast sea didst bring a watchful heart
Still couchant, an inevitable ear,
And an eye practised like a blind man's touch.
Back to the joyless ocean thou art gone ;
Nor from this vestige of thy musing hours
Could I withhold thy honoured name,—and now
I love the fir-grove with a perfect love.
Thither do I withdraw when cloudless suns
Shine hot, or wind blows troublesome and strong :
And there I sit at evening, when the steep
Of Silver-how, and Grasmere's peaceful lake,
And one green island, gleam between the stems
Of the dark firs, a visionary scene !
And, while I gaze upon the spectacle

Of clouded splendour, on this dream-like sight
Of solemn loveliness, I think on thee,
My Brother, and on all which thou hast lost.
Nor seldom, if I rightly guess, while Thou,
Muttering the verses which I muttered first
Among the mountains, through the midnight watch
Art pacing thoughtfully the vessel's deck
In some far region, here, while o'er my head,
At every impulse of the moving breeze,
The fir-grove murmurs with a sea-like sound,
Alone I tread this path ;—for aught I know,
Timing my steps to thine ; and, with a store
Of undistinguishable sympathies,
Mingling most earnest wishes for the day
When we, and others whom we love, shall meet
A second time, in Grasmere's happy Vale.

John Wordsworth is referred to in others of the poems, especially in the *Elegiac Stanzas* associated with Grisdale Tarn, the final parting-place of the brothers. The fraternal tie that united them was specially strong and tender, and Wordsworth's grief at his brother's death was intense. John Wordsworth was captain of the ship *Abergavenny*, which was wrecked on the Bill of Portland

in February, 1804. The story of the shipwreck is familiar to all readers of Wordsworth; but the following letter from the poet to his friend Richard Sharp, referring to his loss, has not hitherto been published.

"GRASMERE, *March* 19, 1805.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—

"You have often been in my thoughts lately, and I have often thought of writing to you, but my heart failed me. No doubt your thoughts too must frequently have turned this way. I half hoped you might have learned something concerning the ship, or my brother's conduct, which you might deem consolatory enough to encourage you to write to us. I have now and then in my distress, turning here and turning there, a thought of this kind; and then I said to myself, What can he write? or what can anybody write to us?

"Poor, blind creatures that we are! How he hoped and struggled, and we hoped and struggled to procure him this voyage! He wrote to us from Portsmouth in the highest spirits, and then came those dismal tidings! O my dear friend, no words can express the anguish which we have endured. Our brother was the pride and delight of our hearts; never present to our minds but as

an object of hope and pleasure: we had no expectation in life a thousand part so pleasing as that of his coming to live among us the life he loved, and reap the reward of his long privations.

"I will not speak of him now, but if you and I ever see each other again, you will permit me to tell you what he was, and how he loved those that were about me, and what it was his wish to have done for us. I am afraid you will find us much changed when you come again to Grasmere. My sister has been stricken to the heart, and looks dismally ill; but I hope time will calm us. Let us see you this summer if possible. We shall make a little tour into Scotland if we can muster courage; but, alas! every plan and scheme at this time only presents to us variety of sorrow. . . .

"Your sincere friend,

"W. WORDSWORTH."

No. XVI.

EMMA'S DELL.

THE first poem in the series to which Wordsworth gave the title, "On the Naming of Places," describes a favourite haunt of his, and of his sister, somewhere on the Easdale beck. It is associated with his sister, as the pool in Rydal Park is with his wife, and as Joanna's Rock is with his sister-in-law. The following are the lines:

IT was an April morning: fresh and clear
The Rivulet, delighting in its strength,
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet the voice
Of waters which the winter had supplied
Was softened down into a vernal tone.
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,
And hopes and wishes, from all living things
Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.
The budding groves seemed eager to urge on
The steps of June: as if their various hues
Were only hindrances that stood between

Them and their object: but, meanwhile, prevailed
Such an entire contentment in the air
That every naked ash, and tardy tree
Yet leafless, showed as if the countenance
With which it looked on this delightful day
Were native to the summer.—Up the brook
I roamed in the confusion of my heart,
Alive to all things and forgetting all.
At length I to a sudden turning came
In this continuous glen, where down a rock
The Stream, so ardent in its course before,
Sent forth such sallies of glad sound that all
Which I till then had heard appeared the voice
Of common pleasure: beast and bird, the lamb,
The shepherd's dog, the linnet and the thrush
Vied with this waterfall, and made a song
Which, while I listened, seemed like the wild growth
Or like some natural produce of the air,
That could not cease to be. Green leaves were here;
But 'twas the foliage of the rocks—the birch,
The yew, the holly, and the bright green thorn,
With hanging islands of resplendent furze:
And, on a summit, distant a short space,
By any who should look beyond the dell,

A single mountain-cottage might be seen.
I gazed and gazed, and to myself I said,
"Our thoughts at least are ours; and this wild nook,
My EMMA, I will dedicate to thee."
——Soon did the spot become my other home,
My dwelling, and my out-of-doors abode.
And, of the Shepherds who have seen me there,
To whom I sometimes in our idle talk
Have told this fancy, two or three, perhaps,
Years after we are gone and in our graves,
When they have cause to speak of this wild place,
May call it by the name of EMMA'S DELL.

Of these lines Wordsworth said to Miss Fenwick: "This poem was suggested on the banks of the brook that runs through Easdale, which is in some parts of its course as wild and beautiful as brook can be. I have composed thousands of verses by the side of it." The spot which he named *Emma's Dell*, in memory of his sister, is confessedly difficult to localize; but there can be little doubt that the one selected corresponds more closely than any other on Easdale beck to the description given in the poem. If one leaves the Easdale road at Goody Bridge, and follows the brook for a few hundred

yards, till a "sudden turning" is made, and remembers that this path was a favourite haunt of Wordsworth and his sister, a spot will be seen answering precisely to the character of *Emma's Dell.* He will come to a deep pool, below a broken waterfall, near the place where the brook approaches the road. Though there may be no birch or yew or holly, or "hanging islands of resplendent furze," the "single mountain-cottage," and the multitudinous "sallies of glad sound" from the broken waterfall, identify the spot with sufficient clearness. The cascade in the distance, in the drawing, is Easdale Force; and above it in the bosom of the hills, is Far Easdale.

No. XVII.

THE ISLAND, GRASMERE.

This island—the "one green island" of the mere—is often referred to by Wordsworth; especially in the fifth of the *Inscriptions*, which he represents as "written with a pencil upon a stone in the wall of the house (an outhouse), on the island of Grasmere."

> Rude is this Edifice, and thou hast seen
> Buildings, albeit rude, that have maintained
> Proportions more harmonious, and approached
> To closer fellowship with ideal grace.
> But take it in good part:—alas! the poor
> Vitruvius of our village had no help
> From the great City; never, upon leaves
> Of red Morocco folio saw displayed,
> In long succession, pre-existing ghosts
> Of Beauties yet unborn—the rustic Lodge
> Antique, and Cottage with verandah graced,
> Nor lacking, for fit company, alcove,

Green-house, shell-grot, and moss-lined hermitage.
Thou see'st a homely Pile, yet to these walls
The heifer comes in the snow-storm, and here
The new-dropped lamb finds shelter from the wind.
And hither does one Poet sometimes row
His pinnace, a small vagrant barge, up-piled
With plenteous store of heath and withered fern
(A lading which he with his sickle cuts,
Among the mountains), and beneath this roof
He makes his summer couch, and here at noon
Spreads out his limbs, while, yet unshorn, the Sheep,
Panting beneath the burthen of their wool,
Lie round him, even as if they were a part
Of his own Household: nor, while from his bed
He looks, through the open door-place, toward the lake
And to the stirring breezes, does he want
Creations lovely as the work of sleep—
Fair sights, and visions of romantic joy!

The "homely pile" upon this island still remains, but it is used merely as a barn, or shelter for sheep.

The following occurs in a letter from S. T. Coleridge to Sir Humphry Davy, dated July 25th, 1800: "We drank tea the night before I left Grasmere, on the island in that

THE ISLAND, GRASMERE. [*Face p.* 82.

lovely lake; our kettle swung over the fire, hanging from the branch of a fir tree, and I lay and saw the woods, and mountains, and lake all trembling, and as it were idealized through the subtle smoke, which rose up from the clear red embers of the fir-apples which we had collected; afterwards, we made a glorious bonfire on the margin, by some elder bushes, whose twigs heaved and sobbed in the uprushing column of smoke. I saw the image of the bonfire, and of us that danced round it—ruddy, laughing faces in the twilight—the image of this in a lake, smooth as that sea to whose waves the Son of God had said *Peace!* May God, and all His sons, love you as I do.—S. T. COLERIDGE."

No. XVIII.

THE HEATH-CLAD ROCKS.

FORTH from a jutting ridge, around whose base
Winds our deep Vale, two heath-clad Rocks ascend
In fellowship, the loftiest of the pair
Rising to no ambitious height ; yet both,
O'er lake and stream, mountain and flowery mead,
Unfolding prospects fair as human eyes
Ever beheld. Up-led with mutual help,
To one or other brow of those twin Peaks
Were two adventurous Sisters wont to climb,
And took no note of the hour while thence they gazed,
The blooming heath their couch, gazed, side by side,
In speechless admiration. I, a witness
And frequent sharer of their calm delight
With thankful heart, to either Eminence
Gave the baptismal name each Sister bore.
Now are they parted, far as Death's cold hand
Hath power to part the Spirits of those who love
As they did love. Ye kindred Pinnacles—

That, while the generations of mankind
Follow each other to their hiding-place
In time's abyss, are privileged to endure
Beautiful in yourselves, and richly graced
With like command of beauty—grant your aid
For MARY'S humble, SARAH'S silent, claim,
That their pure joy in nature may survive
From age to age in blended memory.

These two "heath-clad rocks" are easily identified. They rise from fifty to sixty feet above the lower road from Rydal to Grasmere, and very near the third milestone from Ambleside. They are still "heath-clad"; and the dense growth of underwood, which covered the ground around them, and made them difficult of approach, being at present (1886) cut down, they are now probably more as they were at the beginning of the century than they have been for many years. They are well seen from the terrace-walk on Loughrigg, or from the path over White Moss Common. The writer of these notes first saw them in company with the late Dr. Cradock, Principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, whose knowledge of the district and unerring instinct of localization were so remarkable. Seated on the height to the east, he pointed

out the remarkable combinations visible from that point, in the view of the twin lakes of Rydal and Grasmere together, and the singular loveliness of the bossy knolls of Loughrigg, with its winding terraces. When I revisited the same spot with him years afterwards (the year before he died), conversation turned to his own immeasurable debt to Wordsworth.

No. XIX.

THE WISHING GATE.

In the vale of Grasmere, by the side of the old highway leading to Ambleside, is a gate, which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing Gate, from a belief that wishes formed or indulged there have a favourable issue.

THE WISHING GATE.

Hope rules a land for ever green:
All powers that serve the bright-eyed Queen
Are confident and gay;
Clouds at her bidding disappear.
Points she to aught?—the bliss draws near
And Fancy smooths the way.

Not such the land of Wishes—there
Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer
And thoughts with things at strife;
Yet how forlorn, should *ye* depart,
Ye superstitions of the *heart*,
How poor, were human life!

When magic lore abjured its might,
Ye did not forfeit one dear right,
One tender claim abate ;
Witness this symbol of your sway,
Surviving near the public way,
The rustic Wishing Gate !

Inquire not if the faery race
Shed kindly influence on the place,
Ere northward they retired ;
If here a warrior left a spell,
Panting for glory as he fell ;
Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,
Composed with Nature's finest care,
And in her fondest love—
Peace to embosom and content—
To overawe the turbulent,
The selfish to reprove.

Yea ! even the Stranger from afar,
Reclining on this moss-grown bar,
Unknowing, and unknown.

The infection of the ground partakes,
Longing for his Beloved—who makes
All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious Spirits fear
The mystic stirrings that are here,
The ancient faith disclaim ?
The local Genius ne'er befriends
Desires whose course in folly ends,
Whose just reward is shame.

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,
If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,
Here crave an easier lot ;
If some have thirsted to renew
A broken vow, or bind a true,
With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast
Upon the irrevocable past,
Some Penitent sincere
May for a worthier future sigh,
While trickles from his downcast eye
No unavailing tear.

The Worldling, pining to be freed
From turmoil, who would turn or speed
The current of his fate,
Might stop before this favoured scene,
At Nature's call, nor blush to lean
Upon the Wishing Gate.

The Sage, who feels how blind, how weak
Is man, though loath such help to *seek*,
Yet, passing, here might pause,
And thirst for insight to allay
Misgiving, while the crimson day
In quietness withdraws ;

Or when the church-clock's knell profound
To Time's first step across the bound
Of midnight makes reply ;
Time pressing on with starry crest,
To filial sleep upon the breast
Of dread eternity

THE WISHING GATE DESTROYED.

'Tis gone—with old belief and dream
That round it clung, and tempting scheme
Released from fear and doubt ;
And the bright landscape too must lie,
By this blank wall, from every eye,
Relentlessly shut out.

Bear witness ye who seldom passed
That opening—but a look ye cast
Upon the lake below,
What spirit-stirring power it gained
From faith which here was entertained,
Though reason might say no.

Blest is that ground, where, o'er the springs
Of history, Glory claps her wings,
Fame sheds the exulting tear ;
Yet earth is wide, and many a nook
Unheard of is, like this, a book
For modest meanings dear.

It was in sooth a happy thought
That grafted, on so fair a spot,
So confident a token
Of coming good ;—the charm is fled ;
Indulgent centuries spun a thread,
Which one harsh day has broken.

Alas ! for him who gave the word ;
Could he no sympathy afford,
Derived from earth or heaven,
To hearts so oft by hope betrayed ;
Their very wishes wanted aid
Which here was freely given ?

Where, for the love-lorn maiden's wound,
Will now so readily be found
A balm of expectation ?
Anxious for far-off children, where
Shall mothers breathe a like sweet air
Of home-felt consolation ?

And not unfelt will prove the loss
'Mid trivial care and petty cross
And each day's shallow grief,

Though the most easily beguiled
Were oft among the first that smiled
At their own fond belief.

If still the reckless change we mourn,
A reconciling thought may turn
To harm that might lurk here,
Ere judgment prompted from within
Fit aims, with courage to begin,
And strength to persevere.

Not Fortune's slave is Man : our state
Enjoins, while firm resolves await
On wishes just and wise,
That strenuous action follow both,
And life be one perpetual growth
Of heaven-ward enterprise.

So taught, so trained, we boldly face
All accidents of time and place ;
Whatever props may fail,
Trust in that sovereign law can spread
New glory o'er the mountain's head,
Fresh beauty through the vale.

That truth informing mind and heart,
The simplest cottager may part,
Ungrieved, with charm and spell;
And yet, lost Wishing Gate, to thee
The voice of grateful memory
Shall bid a kind farewell!

These two poems require little local commentary. A gate still stands at the old spot, though not the "moss-grown bar" of Wordsworth's day, the disappearance of which suggested the sequel poem. But there, at the old break in the wall of the road under John's Grove, its successor stands, overlooking the lake. It is surely to be hoped, that when the present one yields to the influences of wind and weather, another may take its place, and the spot continue to be known "time out of mind" as the site of the Grasmere Wishing Gate; especially since a "blank wall" now "reluctantly shuts out" the "bright landscape" and the "lake below," from the eye of every traveller who passes along that road.

No. XX.

THE GLOW-WORM ROCK.

AMONGST Wordsworth's "Poems of the Imagination" is one called *The Primrose of the Rock*. He said of it, in the note dictated to Miss Fenwick: "This rock stands on the right hand, a little way leading up the vale from Rydal to Grasmere. We have been in the habit of calling it the Glow-worm Rock, from the number of glow-worms we have often seen hanging on it as described. The tuft of primroses has, I fear, been washed away by heavy rains."

THE PRIMROSE OF THE ROCK.

A ROCK there is whose homely front
  The passing traveller slights;
Yet there the glow-worms hang their lamps,
  Like stars, at various heights:
And one coy Primrose to that Rock
  The vernal breeze invites.

What hideous warfare hath been waged,
  What kingdoms overthrown,
Since first I spied that Primrose-tuft
  And marked it for my own;
A lasting link in Nature's chain
  From highest heaven let down!

The flowers, still faithful to the stems,
  Their fellowship renew:
The stems are faithful to the root,
  That worketh out of view:
And to the rock the root adheres
  In every fibre true.

Close clings to earth the living rock,
  Though threatening still to fall;
The earth is constant to her sphere;
  And God upholds them all:
So blooms this lonely Plant, nor dreads
  Her annual funeral.

* * * * *

Here closed the meditative strain;
  But air breathed soft that day,

The hoary mountain-heights were cheered
The sunny vale looked gay;
And to the Primrose of the Rock
I gave this after-lay.

I sang—Let myriads of bright flowers,
Like Thee, in field and grove
Revive unenvied;—mightier far,
Than tremblings that reprove
Our vernal tendencies to hope,
Is God's redeeming love:

That love which changed—for wan disease,
For sorrow that had bent
O'er hopeless dust, for withered age—
Their moral element,
And turned the thistles of a curse
To types beneficent.

Sin-blighted though we are, we too,
The reasoning Sons of Men,
From one oblivious winter called
Shall rise, and breathe again:
And in eternal summer lose
Our threescore years and ten.

To humbleness of heart descends
  This prescience from on high,
The faith that elevates the just,
  Before and when they die;
And makes each soul a separate heaven,
  A court for Deity.

In the second stanza of *The Waggoner* the glow-worms on this rock are referred to.

"Confiding glow-worms, 'tis a night
  Propitious to your earth-born light!"

Glow-worms were to be seen in the district in 1860. They have since disappeared. The working of the quarry, not to speak of the hideous noise and smoke of the Manchester water works—now making such havoc of the vales of Grasmere and Rydal—would of itself probably frighten away such a shy creature as the glow-worm. At the quarry near this rock, Wordsworth met *The Beggars*, on whom he wrote two poems, the first in 1802, the second "many years afterwards." Not far off, on White Moss Common, above the Primrose Rock, is the

"Pool bare to the eye of heaven,"

on the margin of which he saw the old Leech-gatherer,

and patient at his work, whom he immortalized poem *Resolution and Independence.*

> "Motionless as a cloud the old man stood,
> That heareth not the loud winds when they call,
> And moveth all together, if it move at all."

In connexion with the Glow-worm Rock, the poem, beginning

> "Among all lovely things my love had been,"

which refers to his sister—and which was written in 1802 and published in 1807, but afterwards so strangely suppressed—will be read with interest.

No. XXI.

GREEN-HEAD GHYLL.

GREEN-HEAD GHYLL is the scene of the pastoral poem *Michael*, written in 1800. To Miss Fenwick Wordsworth said, in 1845 : "The sheepfold remains, or rather the ruins of it. The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town End. The name of the Evening Star was not given to this house, but to another on the same side of the valley, more to the north."

There is now a finished sheepfold in the Ghyll, as you enter it from the lower valley ; but Michael's unfinished one was much higher up, between Stone Arthur and Rydal Fell.

MICHAEL.

A PASTORAL POEM.

IF from the public way you turn your steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
You will suppose that with an upright path

Your feet must struggle: in such bold ascent
The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.
But, courage! for around that boisterous brook
The mountains have all opened out themselves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen; but they
Who journey thither find themselves alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is in truth an utter solitude;
Nor should I have made mention of this Dell
But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones:
And to that simple object appertains
A story—unenriched with strange events,
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that spake to me
Of Shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved;—not verily
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.

* * * * *

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name;
An old man, stout of heart, and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength: his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone; and, oftentimes,
When others heeded not, he heard the South
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
'The winds are now devising work for me!"
And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives
The traveller to a shelter, summoned him
Up to the mountains: he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists,
That came to him, and left him, on the heights.
So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs, who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,

Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.
Fields where, with cheerful spirits he had breathed
The common air ; hills, which with vigorous step
He had so often climbed ; which had impressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
The certainty of honourable gain ;
Those fields, those hills—what could they less ?—had
laid
Strong hold on his affections, were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

* * * * *

Michael's home is thus described :

. . . As it chanced
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail Raise,
And westward to the village near the lake ;
And from this constant light, so regular

And so far seen, the House itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named THE EVENING STAR.

* * * * *

This cottage was gone in 1800, when the poem was written. It stood where the coach-house and stables of "The Hollins" now stand.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll
In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a Sheep-fold; and, before he heard
The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gathered up
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge
Lay thrown together, ready for the work.

* * * * *

Among the rocks
He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,
And listened to the wind; and, as before,
Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,
And for the land, his small inheritance.
And to that hollow dell from time to time

Did he repair, to build the Fold of which
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
The pity which was then in every heart
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all
That many and many a day he thither went,
And never lifted up a single stone.
There, by the Sheepfold, sometimes was he seen
Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,
Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
The length of full seven years, from time to time,
He at the building of this Sheepfold wrought,
And left the work unfinished when he died.
Three years, or little more, did Isabel
Survive her husband: at her death the estate
Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.
The cottage which was named THE EVENING STAR
Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the ground
On which it stood : great changes have been wrought
In all the neighbourhood :—yet the oak is left
That grew beside their door ; and the remains
Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

The following extracts from Miss Wordsworth's Gras-

mere journal will show how carefully her brother worked at this most pathetic of poems.

"*Oct.* 11, 1800.—W. walked up Green-head Ghyll in search of a sheep-fold. . . . The sheep-fold is falling away. It is built nearly in the form of a heart unequally divided.

Oct. 13.—William composed in the evening.

„ 15.—W. composed a little. . . . W. again composed at the sheep-fold after dinner.

Oct. 18.—W. worked all the morning at the sheep-fold, but in vain. He lay down till seven o'clock, but did not sleep.

Oct. 19.—William got to work.

„ 20.—W. worked in the morning at the sheep-fold.

„ 21.—W. had been unsuccessful in the morning at the sheep-old.

Oct. 22.—W. composed without much success at the sheep-fold.

„ 23.—W. was not successful in composition in the evening.

„ 24.—W was only partly successful in composition.

„ 26.—W. composed a good deal all the morning.

„ 28.—W. could not compose much: fatigued himself with altering.

„ 30.—W. worked at his poem all the morning.

Nov. 10.—W. at the sheep-fold.

„ 12.—W. has been working at the sheep-fold

Dec. 9.—W. finished his poem to-day."

No. XXII.

LOUGHRIGG TARN.

LOUGHRIGG TARN, on the southern face of Loughrigg Fell, is described with some minuteness in Wordsworth's book on the "Scenery of the Lakes"; and in his *Epistle to Sir George Beaumont*, written in 1811—which records a journey taken from Grasmere to Bootle—he refers to it thus:

. . . From our own dear Vale we pass
And soon approach Diana's Looking-glass!
To Loughrigg Tarn, round, clear, and bright as heaven
Such name Italian fancy would have given,
Ere on its banks the few grey cabins rose
That yet disturb not its concealed repose
More than the feeblest wind that idly blows.

Ah, Beaumont! when an opening in the road
Stopped me at once by charm of what it showed,
The encircling region vividly exprest
Within the mirror's depth, a world at rest—

Sky streaked with purple, grove and craggy *bield*,*
And the smooth green of many a pendent field,
And, quieted and soothed, a torrent small,
A little daring, would-be waterfall ;
One chimney smoking and its azure wreath,
Associate all in the calm Pool beneath,
With here and there a faint imperfect gleam
Of water-lilies veiled in misty steam—
What wonder at this hour of stillness deep,
A shadowy link 'tween wakefulness and sleep.
When Nature's self, amid such blending, seems
To render visible her own soft dreams ;
If, mixed with what appeared of rock, lawn, wood,
Fondly embosomed in the tranquil flood,
A glimpse I caught of that Abode, by thee
Designed to rise in humble privacy,
A lowly Dwelling, here to be outspread,
Like a small Hamlet, with its bashful head
Half hid in native trees! Alas! 'tis not
Nor ever was ; I sighed, and left the spot,
Unconscious of its own untoward lot,

* A word common in the country, signifying shelter, as in Scotland.

LOUGHRIGG TARN. [*Face p.* 112.

And thought in silence, with regret too keen,
Of unexperienced joys that might have been ;
Of neighbourhood and intermingling arts,
And golden summer days uniting cheerful hearts.
But time, irrevocable time, is flown,
And let us utter thanks for blessings sown
And reaped—what hath been, and what is, our own.

In the Fenwick note to this poem, Wordsworth, alluding to Sir George Beaumont's purchase of the tarn with the view to build a residence near it, says,—"The project of building was given up, Sir George retaining possession of the tarn. Many years afterwards, a Kendal tradesman, born upon its banks, applied to me for the purchase of it ; and accordingly it was sold for the sum that had been given for it, and the money laid out, under my direction, upon a substantial oak fence for a certain number of yew trees to be planted in Grasmere churchyard. . . . The whole eight are now thriving, and are an ornament to a place which, during recent years, has lost much of its rustic simplicity by the introduction of iron palisades, to fence off family burying-grounds, and by numerous ornaments, some of them in very bad taste, from which this place of burial was in my memory quite free. . . .

May the trees be taken care of hereafter, when we are all gone; and some of them will perhaps, at some far distant time, rival the majesty of the yew at Lorton and those which I have described as growing at Borrowdale, where they are still to be seen in grand assemblage."

The note appended to the sequel of this poem, composed thirty years afterwards, is as follows:

"Loughrigg Tarn, alluded to in the foregoing epistle, resembles, though much smaller in compass, the Lake Nemi, or *Speculum Dianæ*, as it is often called, not only in its clear waters and circular form, and the beauty immediately surrounding it, but also as being overlooked by the eminence of Langdale Pikes, as Lake Nemi is by that of Monte Calvo. Since this epistle was written, Loughrigg Tarn has lost much of its beauty by the felling of many natural clumps of wood, relics of the old forest, particularly upon the farm called 'The Oaks,' from the abundance of that tree which grew there.

"It is to be regretted, upon public grounds, that Sir George Beaumont did not carry into effect his intention of constructing here a Summer Retreat in the style I have described, as his taste would have set an example *how buildings, with all the accommodation modern society requires, might be introduced into even the most secluded*

parts of the country without injuring their native character."

The truth of this remark will be obvious to any one of ordinarily cultivated taste when he sees the modern erections—hard, angular, and garishly obtrusive—that are now put up in certain parts of the Lake Country, without the slightest regard to what Wordsworth calls the "native character" of the district.

Another poem associated with Loughrigg Tarn is the fragment belonging to the year 1845—one of the latest Wordsworth wrote—beginning,

> So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive,
> Would that the little flowers were born to live,
> Conscious of half the pleasure that they give;
>
> That to this mountain-daisy's self was known
> The beauty of its star-shaped shadow, thrown
> On the smooth surface of this naked stone!

Of this fragment, Archdeacon Graves—who accompanied Wordsworth on the day it was written—says: "When we reached the side of Loughrigg Tarn, . . . the loveliness of the scene arrested our steps and fixed our gaze. The splendour of a July noon surrounded us, and lit up the landscape, with the Langdale Pikes soaring above, and the

bright tarn shining beneath; and when the poet's eyes were satisfied with their feast on the beauties familiar to them, they sought relief in the search—to them a happy, vital habit—for new beauty in the flower-enamelled turf at his feet. Then his attention was arrested by a fair smooth stone, of the size of an ostrich's egg, seeming to imbed at its centre, and at the same time to display, a dark star-shaped fossil of most distinct outline. Upon closer inspection, this proved to be the shadow of a daisy, projected upon it with extraordinary precision by the intense light of an almost vertical sun. The poet drew the attention of the rest of the party to the minute but beautiful phenomenon, and gave expression at the time to thoughts suggested by it. . . ."

Judge Talfourd, in his *Vacation Rambles*, speaking of Loughrigg Fell, says:

"This beautiful piece of upland might seem a platform—if such a phrase did not belie its waving, rock-ribbed, and pinnacled surface—built by Nature, to enable her true lovers to enjoy, in quick succession, the most splendid variety she can exhibit. On one side, from the gently ascending path, bordered by scanty heather, you embrace the broader portion of Windermere, spreading out its arms as if to embrace the low and lovely hills that enfold

it—a view without an angle or a contrast—a scene of perfect harmony and peace. Ascend a lofty slab of rock, not many paces onward, and you have lying before you the delicious vale of the Rotha—a stream gliding through the greenest meadows—with Fairfield beyond, expanding its huge arms as of a giant's chair, and with Fox How in the midst, where the great and good Dr. Arnold—great in goodness—embraced the glories of the external world with all the earnestness of his generous and simple nature, and nourished that sense of the imaginative and harmonious aspects of humanity and faith which grew clearer and deeper as he advanced in years. Wind your way through two small valleys, each having its own oval basin, and from another height you may look down on the still mirror of Rydalmere, with its small central island, the nest of herons, and following the valley to Grasmere with its low white church tower, beyond the figured crest of Helm Crag, behold the vast triangle of Skiddaw filling the distance; while midway, just rising above green mountains, you may see the topmost *rind* of Helvellyn, curved in air, with one black descent just indicated; and when the eye has been satiated with loveliness, look down just below on a mansion at the foot of Nab Scar, the dwelling of the Poet, not of these only, but of all earth's scenes:

who, disdaining the frequent description of particular combinations of its beauties, has unveiled the sources of profoundest sentiment they contain ; and, more than any writer who ever lived, has diffused that love of external nature which now sheds its purifying influence abroad among our people. Pass from thence to the highest point of all this region, and look down, beyond the calm, round tarn of Loughrigg, into a magnificent chaos, the Langdale vales, with the ribbed pike of Scawfell beyond them, and in the midst those Pikes, which, yielding to many of the surrounding hills in height, surpass them all in form."

No. XXIII.

THE CHURCHYARD, GRASMERE.

BOTH Grasmere Church and Churchyard are sacred to the memory of Wordsworth.

> Green is the Churchyard, beautiful and green,
> Ridge rising gently by the side of ridge,
> A heaving surface, almost wholly free
> From interruption of sepulchral stones,
> And mantled o'er with aboriginal turf
> And everlasting flowers. These Dalesmen trust
> The lingering gleam of their departed lives
> To oral record, and the silent heart;
> Depositories faithful and more kind
> Than fondest epitaph.
>
> *The Excursion*, Book VI.

It was, in the poet's time,

> "almost wholly free
> From interruption of sepulchral stones."

It is not so now. Wordsworth, his wife (Mary Hutchinson),

his sister Dorothy, their daughter Dora (Mrs. Quillinan), and their two children who died in infancy, lie together under the shade of one of the yew-trees which the poet planted. The grave of Hartley Coleridge is close at hand. There are few spots in England more peaceful, or more sacred. The church of Stratford-upon-Avon has associations with the Mightier Dead; but it is doubtful if any single spot—whether at Weimar or Florence, at Athens or Rome, or Westminster Abbey—evokes a deeper feeling than that which rises in the heart of the pilgrim who reverently visits the churchyard of Grasmere. The daisy, of which Wordsworth wrote so much, has

"its place upon its poet's grave,"

seeming there, if anywhere in the world, to have a "function apostolical."

A correspondent writes: "To lie under the mound on which the shadow of that grey tower falls, seems scarcely like a banishment from life, only a deeper sleep, in a home quieter, but not less lovely, than those which surround the margin of the lake. Voices of children come up from the village street, with the hum of rustic life. From sunny heights the lowing of cattle is heard, and the bleat of the sheep that pasture on the hill sides; and

by day and night unceasingly, the Rotha, hurrying past the churchyard wall, mingles the babble of its waters with the soft *susurrus* of the breeze."

As to the interior of the Church at Grasmere, Wordsworth himself regretted the so-called improvements which impaired "the rude and antique majesty" of its former appearance. He preferred the "oak benches with a single rail at the back" to the modern "pews." The interior of the Church, as it was in the beginning of the century, is described (although with sundry additions taken from Bowness Church) in the fifth book of *The Excursion*, thus:

> As chanced, the portals of the sacred Pile
> Stood open; and we entered. On my frame,
> At such transition from the fervid air,
> A grateful coolness fell, that seemed to strike
> The heart, in concert with that temperate awe
> And natural reverence which the place inspired.
> Not raised in nice proportions was the pile,
> But large and massy; for duration built;
> With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld
> By naked rafters intricately crossed,
> Like leafless underboughs, in some thick wood,
> All withered by the depth of shade above.

Admonitory texts inscribed the walls,
Each in its ornamental scroll enclosed;
Each also crowned with wingèd heads—a pair
Of rudely painted Cherubim. The floor
Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise,
Was occupiȩd by oaken benches ranged
In seemly rows; the chancel only showed
Some vain distinctions, marks of earthly state
By immemorial privilege allowed:
Though with the Encincture's special sanctity
But ill according. An heraldic shield,
Varying its tincture with the changeful light,
Imbued the altar-window; fixed aloft
A faded hatchment hung, and one by time
Yet undiscoloured. A capacious pew
Of sculptured oak stood here, with drapery lined;
And marble monuments were here displayed
Thronging the walls; and on the floor beneath
Sepulchral stones appeared, with emblems graven
And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with small
And shining effigies of brass inlaid.

The Excursion, Book V.

The "naked rafters intricately crossed," the "admonitory texts,"

"each in its ornamental scroll enclosed,"

some of the "oaken benches," the "heraldic shield" in the "altar-window," the "faded hatchment," the "marble monuments," and "sepulchral stones with foot-worn epitaphs," are still there; and it is to be hoped that no changes, excepting what are absolutely necessary, will be made in the interior—especially none which would impair the traditional interest, or destroy the antiquarian character of a building, that is rich in priceless historic memories. The fifth, sixth, and seventh books of *The Excursion* must be read on the spot by one who wishes to realize the Church, and "The Churchyard among the Mountains," of Wordsworth's time. Much minute identification is still possible, *e.g.* the graves of the Sympson family, minutely described in the seventh book:

> These grassy heaps lie amicably close,
> . . . like surges heaving in the wind
> Along the surface of a mountain pool:
>
> * * * * *
>
> Five graves, and only five, that rise together
> Unsociably sequestered, and encroaching
> On the smooth play-ground of the village-school.

The sound of Wray Ghyll force—between Easdale and Silver How—may be heard,

> The soft voice
> Of yon white torrent falling down the rock;

while the "lowly parsonage" in which the pastor (Sympson) lived, "all unembowered and naked," with its

> Smooth blue slabs of mountain stone
> With which the parlour-floor, in simplest guise
> Of pastoral homesteads, had been long inlaid
> (*The Excursion*, Book VII.),

is still to be seen on the eastern side of the road, a short distance beyond the Swan Inn.

No. XXIV.

LANCRIGG TERRACE.

THE natural terrace-walk, from the small mountain farm of Lancrigg westwards, through a somewhat tangled copse, up the Easdale Valley, and under Helm Crag, was one that Wordsworth tells us he and his sister found out, three days after they took up their abode at Dove Cottage, in the year 1800; and it "long remained their favourite haunt." Lady Richardson says "it was their custom to spend the fine days of summer in the open air, chiefly in tne valley of Easdale. *The Prelude* was chiefly composed on a green mountain terrace, on the Easdale side of Helm Crag, known by the name of Under Lancrigg, a place which he used to say he 'knew by heart.' The ladies sat at their work on the hill-side while he walked to and fro, on the smooth green mountain turf, humming out his verses to himself, and then repeating them to his sympathising and ready listeners, to be noted down on the spot, and transcribed at home."

A little "rocky well" on this terrace was known and

prized by him, before he knew the Nab Well, at Rydal Half way along the terrace, amid the wild hazel wood, is that moss-covered Stone described in one of the Miscellaneous sonnets.

> MARK the concentred hazels that enclose
> Yon old grey Stone, protected from the ray
> Of noontide suns :—and even the beams that play
> And glance, while wantonly the rough wind blows,
> Are seldom free to touch the moss that grows
> Upon that roof, amid embowering gloom,
> The very image framing of a Tomb,
> In which some ancient Chieftain finds repose
> Among the lonely mountains.—Live, ye trees!
> And thou, grey Stone, the pensive likeness keep
> Of a dark chamber where the Mighty sleep:
> For more than Fancy to the influence bends
> When solitary Nature condescends
> To mimic Time's forlorn humanities.

This natural terrace-walk is little changed since the beginning of the century: although, when dictating the Fenwick notes, Wordsworth complained that "much of the wood that veiled it from the glare of day had been

felled." Among the hollies that still grow in the wilder part of the "Tom Intak" are doubtless some that have grown up from the berries put in by the poet in 1841, of which Lady Richardson tells us that "as he put the seeds in, he every now and then muttered, in his low solemn tone, that beautiful verse from Burns's *Vision.*

'And wear thou this, she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head.
The polished leaves and berries red
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away.'

He said also, while putting in the berries, 'I like to do this for futurity.'"

A small group of oak trees is still to be seen in the flat of Easdale—like an island in a green sea-meadow—to which Wordsworth often called Lady Richardson's attention. "Watch your shrubs well," he said, "that they may not prevent the sight of that clump of oaks; for they give a great character to the view."

An extract may here be given from Wordsworth's own *Description of the Scenery of the Lakes.*

"The woods consist chiefly of oak, ash, and birch, and

here and there wych-elm, with underwood of hazel, the white and black thorn, and hollies; in moist places alders and willows abound; and yews among the rocks. Formerly the whole country must have been covered with wood to a great height up the mountains; where native Scotch firs must have grown in great profusion, as they do in the northern part of Scotland to this day. But not one of these old inhabitants has existed, perhaps, for some hundreds of years; the beautiful traces however of the universal sylvan appearance the country formerly had, yet survive in the native coppice-woods that have been protected by inclosures, and also in the forest trees and hollies, which, though disappearing fast, are yet scattered both over the inclosed and uninclosed parts of the mountains. The same is expressed by the beauty and intricacy with which the fields and coppice-woods are often intermingled; the plough of the first settlers having followed naturally the veins of richer, dryer, or less stony soil; and thus it has shaped out an intermixture of wood and lawn, with a grace and wildness which it would have been impossible for the hand of studied art to produce. Other trees have been introduced within these last fifty years, such as beeches, larches, limes, etc., and plantations of firs, seldom with advantage, and often with great injury to the

appearance of the country; but the sycamore (which I believe was brought into this island from Germany, not more than two hundred years ago) has long been the favourite of the cottagers; and, with the fir, has been chosen to screen their dwellings; and is sometimes found in the fields whither the winds or the waters may have carried its seeds."

No. XXV.

GRISDALE TARN.

No Cumbrian tarn is more impressive than Grisdale, in its loneliness and peaceful seclusion. Frederick Faber, of whom Wordsworth said, "He had not only as good an eye for Nature as I have, but a better one," describes it thus:

In yon pale hollow would I dwell,
Where waveless Grisdale meekly lies,
And the three clefts of grassy fell
Let in the blueness of the skies;
And lowland sounds come travelling up
To echo in that mountain cup.

Where from the tarn the shallow brook
By rough Helvellyn shapes its way,
The window of my cell should look
Eastward upon the birth of day.

It was here that William Wordsworth and his sailor brother John,—who is imperishably associated with the

Grove of Fir trees at Grasmere,—parted for the last time.

In memory of this brother, Wordsworth wrote the following

ELEGIAC VERSES,

IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, JOHN WORDSWORTH, COMMANDER OF THE E. I. COMPANY'S SHIP THE EARL OF ABERGAVENNY, IN WHICH HE PERISHED BY CALAMITOUS SHIPWRECK, FEB. 6TH, 1805.

Composed near the Mountain track that leads from Grasmere through Grisdale Hawes, where it descends towards Patterdale.

I.

THE Sheep-boy whistled loud, and lo!
That instant, startled by the shock,
The Buzzard mounted from the rock
Deliberate and slow:
Lord of the air, he took his flight;
Oh! could he on that woeful night
Have lent his wing, my Brother dear,
For one poor moment's space to Thee,
And all who struggled with the Sea,
When safety was so near.

II.

Thus in the weakness of my heart
I spoke (but let that pang be still)
When rising from the rock at will,
I saw the Bird depart.
And let me calmly bless the Power
That meets me in this unknown Flower,
Affecting type of him I mourn!
With calmness suffer and believe,
And grieve, and know that I must grieve,
Not cheerless, though forlorn.

III.

Here did we stop; and here looked round
While each into himself descends,
For that last thought of parting Friends
That is not to be found.
Hidden was Grasmere Vale from sight,
Our home and his, his heart's delight,
His quiet heart's selected home.
But time before him melts away,
And he hath feeling of a day
Of blessedness to come.

IV.

Full soon in sorrow did I weep,
Taught that the mutual hope was dust,
In sorrow, but for higher trust,
How miserably deep!
All vanished in a single word,
A breath, a sound, and scarcely heard:
Sea—Ship—drowned—Shipwreck—so it came,
The meek, the brave, the good, was gone;
He who had been our living John
Was nothing but a name.

V.

That was indeed a parting! oh,
Glad am I, glad that it is past;
For there were some on whom it cast
Unutterable woe.
But they as well as I have gains;—
From many a humble source, to pains
Like these, there comes a mild release;
Even here I feel it, even this Plant
Is in its beauty ministrant
To comfort and to peace.

VI.

He would have loved thy modest grace,
Meek Flower! To Him I would have said,
"It grows upon its native bed
Beside our Parting-place;
There, cleaving to the ground it lies
With multitude of purple eyes,
Spangling a cushion green like moss;
But we will see it, joyful tide!
Some day, to see it in its pride,
The mountain will we cross."

VII.

—Brother and friend, if verse of mine
Have power to make thy virtues known,
Here let a monumental Stone
Stand—sacred as a Shrine;
And to the few who pass this way,
Traveller or Shepherd, let it say,
Long as these mighty rocks endure,—
Oh do not thou too fondly brood,
Although deserving of all good,
On any earthly hope, however pure! *

* The plant alluded to is the moss campion (*Silene acaulis*, of Linnæus).

The late Dr. Cradock, wrote thus to me of this poem: "The parting-place of the brothers William and John Wordsworth is marked with unusual precision in the poet's note on these verses. It is exactly where the Helvellyn path diverges from the old packhorse track to Patterdale, and is passed by hundreds of tourists. I have found the moss campion, in times past, within a few yards of the spot; but I do not think it can now be seen within 200 yards of it. It goes out of flower before the main influx of tourists, and may thus escape entire destruction. The time of its flowering shows that Wordsworth's visit must have been in the spring or very early summer [of 1805], and therefore while his grief was fresh. His burst of feeling on seeing the buzzard rise from the crags of Dollywagon is most true to nature. It is marvellous with what perverse ingenuity recent sorrow assimilates every object to itself. The far-fetched connexion between the bird's flight and the shipwreck might possibly have occurred to any one under the same circumstances; but the comfort which Wordsworth found in the little flower is all his own. In order to understand it, it is necessary to understand *him*."

Near this parting-place of the Brothers, about a hundred yards from the tarn as one descends to Patterdale,

a panel has been sunk in the face of the native rock, with an inscription taken from the *Elegiac Verses*. This was done by the Wordsworth Society, at the suggestion of Mr. Rawnsley. What he calls "the lonely isolation of this mountain memorial" must appeal

> "to the few who pass that way,
> Traveller or Shepherd."

And now that a Monumental Stone is raised at the place where the poet wished it, it is to be hoped that for many generations it will

> "Stand—SACRED as a shrine."

An unpublished letter from Wordsworth to his friend Richard Sharp, on this brother's death, is quoted at p. 75. A similar one, from their sister Dorothy to her friend Mrs. Marshall, may be given here. I am indebted for the use of it to the kindness of Mrs. Marshall's daughter, the Dowager Lady Monteagle:

"*March 16th*, 1805. GRASMERE.

". . . It does me good to weep for him, and it does me good to find that others weep, and I bless them for it. . . . It is with me, when I write, as when I am walking out in this vale, once so full of joy, I can

turn to no object that does not remind me of our loss. I see nothing that he would not have loved, and enjoyed. . . . My consolations rather come to me in gusts of feeling, than are the quiet growth of my mind. I know it will not always be so. The time will come when the light of the setting sun upon these mountain tops will be as heretofore a pure joy; not the same *gladness*, that can never be—but yet a joy even more tender. It will soothe me to know how happy he would have been, could he have seen the same beautiful spectacle. . . . He was taken away in the freshness of his manhood: pure he was, and innocent as a child. Never human being was more thoroughly modest, and his courage I need not speak of. He was 'seen speaking with apparent cheerfulness to the first mate a few minutes before the ship went down'; and when nothing more could be done, he said, 'The will of God be done.' I have no doubt when he felt that it was out of his power to save his life he was as calm as before, if some thought of what we should endure did not awaken a pang. . . . He loved solitude, and he rejoiced in society. He would wander alone amongst these hills with his fishing-rod, or led on by the mere pleasure of walking, for many hours; or he would walk with W. or me, or both of us, and was continually

pointing out—with a gladness which is seldom seen but in very young people—something which perhaps would have escaped our observation ; for he had so fine an eye that no distinction was unnoticed by him, and so tender a feeling that he never noticed anything in vain. Many a time has he called out to me at evening to look at the moon or stars, or a cloudy sky, or this vale in the quiet moonlight ; but the stars and moon were his chief delight. He made of them his companions when he was at sea, and was never tired of those thoughts which the silence of the night fed in him. Then he was so happy by the fireside. Any little business of the house interested him. He loved our cottage. He helped us to furnish it, and to make the garden. Trees are growing now which he planted. . . . He stayed with us till the 29th of September, having come to us about the end of January. During that time Mary Hutchinson—now Mary Wordsworth—stayed with us six weeks. John used to walk with her everywhere, and they were exceedingly attached to each other ; so my poor sister mourns with us, not merely because we have lost one who was so dear to William and me, but from tender love to John and an intimate knowledge of him. Her hopes as well as ours were fixed on John. . . . I can think of nothing but of our de-

parted brother, yet I am very tranquil to-day. I honour him, and love him, and glory in his memory. . . ."

Other poems of Wordsworth's contain allusions to, and were in part suggested by, his brother John;—notably the *Character of the Happy Warrior*, and that pathetic idyl associated with Ennerdale and the Pillar Rock, *The Brothers*.

No. XXVI.

HELVELLYN.

HELVELLYN is referred to in many of the Poems, especially in *Fidelity*, in the stanzas addressed to Miss Blackett on her first ascent of the mountain, and in the *Musings near Aquapendente*.

Fidelity is the record of the devotion of a dog to its master, who was killed by falling over the rocks above Red Tarn, near the summit of Helvellyn. These Helvellyn rocks are represented in Mr. Goodwin's drawing.

FIDELITY.

A BARKING sound the Shepherd hears,
A cry as of a dog or fox;
He halts—and searches with his eyes
Among the scattered rocks:
And now at distance can discern
A stirring in a brake of fern;
And instantly a dog is seen,
Glancing through that covert green.
The Dog is not of mountain breed;
Its motions, too, are wild and shy;

With something, as the Shepherd thinks,
Unusual in its cry:
Nor is there any one in sight
All round, in hollow or on height;
Nor shout, nor whistle strikes his ear;
What is the creature doing here?

It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps, till June, December's snow;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn below!
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway, or cultivated land;
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer;
The crags repeat the raven's croak,
In symphony austere;
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud—
And mists that spread the flying shroud;
And sunbeams; and the sounding blast,
That, if it could, would hurry past;
But that enormous barrier holds it fast.

Not free from boding thoughts, a while
The Shepherd stood ; then makes his way
O'er rocks and stones, following the Dog
As quickly as he may ;
Nor far had gone before he found
A human skeleton on the ground ;
The appalled Discoverer with a sigh
Looks round, to learn the history.

From those abrupt and perilous rocks
The Man had fallen, that place of fear !
At length upon the Shepherd's mind
It breaks, and all is clear :
He instantly recalled the name,
And who he was, and whence he came ;
Remembered, too, the very day
On which the Traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
This lamentable tale I tell !
A lasting monument of words
This wonder merits well.
The Dog, which still was hovering nigh,
Repeating the same timid cry,
This Dog, had been through three months' space
A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
When this ill-fated Traveller died,
The Dog had watched about the spot,
Or by his master's side:
How nourished here through such long time
He knows who gave that love sublime;
And gave that strength of feeling, great
Above all human estimate!

This incident is commemorated also by Sir Walter Scott, in his lines to *Helvellyn*, and by Thomas Wilkinson, in his poem *Emont Vale.*

The poem addressed to Miss Blackett, *On her first Ascent to the Summit of Helvellyn*, is as follows:

TO———,

ON HER FIRST ASCENT TO THE SUMMIT OF HELVELLYN.

Inmate of a mountain-dwelling,
Thou hast clomb aloft, and gazed
From the watch-towers of Helvellyn;
Awed, delighted, and amazed!

Potent was the spell that bound thee,
Not unwilling to obey

For blue Ether's arms, flung round thee,
Stilled the paintings of dismay.

Lo! the dwindled woods and meadows;
What a vast abyss is there!
Lo! the clouds, the solemn shadows,
And the glistenings—heavenly fair!

And a record of commotion
Which a thousand ridges yield;
Ridge, and gulf, and distant ocean
Gleaming like a silver shield!

Maiden! now take flight;—inherit
Alps or Andes—they are thine!
With the morning's roseate Spirit,
Sweep their length of snowy line;

Or survey their bright dominions
In the gorgeous colours drest
Flung from off the purple pinions,
Evening spreads throughout the west!

Thine are all the coral fountains
Warbling in each sparry vault
Of the untrodden lunar mountains;
Listen to their songs!—or halt,

To Niphates' top invited,
Whither spiteful Satan steered;
Or descend where the ark alighted,
When the green earth re-appeared;

For the power of hills is on thee,
As was witnessed through thine eye
Then when old Helvellyn won thee
To confess their majesty!

In the poems recording his Italian tour with Henry Crabb Robinson, in 1835, there is one, very characteristic of Wordsworth, called *Musings near Aquapendente*—name most musical, and exquisite in its dim suggestiveness. The sight of the yellow broom, growing amid the Apennines in April, at once sent him homeward to the hills and vales of his native land, and he greets his own "Fairfield," and "Helvellyn's top," and "Greenside Fell," and "Glenridding Screes, and low Glencoign." He thinks too of that happy day when he and Scott, the mighty "Wizard of the North," ascended Helvellyn in company, where

"once together, in his day of strength,
We stood rejoicing, as if earth were free
From sorrow, like the sky above our heads.

No. XXVII.

AIRA FORCE.

DESCENDING Helvellyn by the road from Grisdale Hawse to Patterdale, one reaches—at a short distance from Ullswater—the secluded glen down which the "wild stream of Aira" flows. The cascade, a short way above Lyulph's Tower, suggested to Wordsworth the poem he called *Airey-Force Valley*. It is one of his later works, but is full of his idealized realism. The breeze just entering the grove—by the oak unfelt, but moving the lighter leaves of the ash—is described as making a "soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs." This description of the effect of Nature on one of the senses by its effect on another sense, suggests a passage in *The Æolian Harp* of Coleridge, in which he speaks of

"A light in sound, a sound-like power in light."

AIREY-FORCE VALLEY.

——— NOT a breath of air
Ruffles the bosom of this leafy glen.

From the brook's margin, wide around, the trees
Are steadfast as the rocks ; the brook itself,
Old as the hills that feed it from afar,
Doth rather deepen than disturb the calm
Where all things else are still and motionless.
And yet, even now, a little breeze, perchance
Escaped from boisterous winds that rage without,
Has entered, by the sturdy oaks unfelt,
But to its gentle touch how sensitive
Is the light ash ! that, pendent from the brow
Of yon dim cave, in seeming silence makes
A soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs,
Powerful almost as vocal harmony
To stay the wanderer's steps and soothe his thoughts.

A "light ash" is still "pendent" at Aira Force. It is thus that Wordsworth speaks of the Force in his "Guide to the Lakes."

"Here is a powerful brook, which dashes among rocks through a deep glen, hung on every side with a rich and happy intermixture of native wood; here are beds of luxuriant fern, aged hawthorns and hollies decked with honeysuckles; and fallow deer glancing and bounding over the lanes and through the thickets."

AIRA FORCE. [*Face p.* 148.

Not far from the point where Aira Force joins the lake of Ullswater is Gowbarrow Park, for ever associated with the poem on the Daffodils.

THE DAFFODILS.

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company!
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

The following is from Miss Wordsworth's Grasmere Journal, under date Thursday, April 15th, 1802; and is the best commentary on the poem,—the prose of the sister being quite as remarkable as the poetry of the brother.

"*Thursday, April 15th*, 1802.

"It was a threatening, misty morning, but mild. We set off after dinner from Grasmere. Mr. Clarkson went a short way with us, but turned back. The wind was furious, and we thought we must have returned. We first rested in the large boat-house, then under a furze bush opposite Mr. Clarkson's. Saw the plough going in the field. The wind seized our breath. The lake was rough. There was a boat by itself, floating in the middle of the bay below Water Millock. We rested again in the Water Millock Lane, the hawthorns black and green; the birches here and there greenish, but there is yet

more of purple to be seen on the twigs. . . . A few primroses by the roadside—wood sorrel flower, the anemone, scentless violets, strawberries, and that starry yellow flower which Mrs. C. calls pilewort. When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park, we saw a few daffodils close to the water side. We fancied that the sea had floated the seeds ashore, and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more, and yet more; and, at last, under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones, about and above them; some rested their heads upon these stones, as on a pillow for weariness; and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake. They looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing. This wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot, and a few stragglers higher up; but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity, unity, and life of that one busy highway. We rested again and again. The bays were stormy, and we heard the waves at different distances, and in the middle of the water, like the sea. . . .

The following letter to Mr. Wrangham was written, the late Bishop of Lincoln tells us, some time after the poem of *The Daffodils* was composed.

"GRASMERE, *Nov. 4th.*

"MY DEAR WRANGHAM,—

"I am indeed much pleased that Mrs. Wrangham and yourself have been gratified by these breathings of simple nature. You mention Butler, Montagu's friend; not Tom Butler, but the conveyancer: when I was in town in spring, he happened to see the volumes lying on Montagu's mantelpiece, and to glance his eye upon the very poem of *The Daffodils*. 'Ay,' says he, 'a fine morsel this for the reviewers.' When this was told me (for I was not present), I observed that there were *two lines* in that little poem which, if thoroughly felt, would annihilate nine-tenths of the reviews of the kingdom, as they would find no readers. The lines I alluded to were these—

> 'They flash upon that inward eye,
> Which is the bliss of solitude.'"

These two lines were composed by Mrs. Wordsworth. Daffodils still grow in abundance on the shore of Ullswater, below Gowbarrow Park.

No. XXVIII.

BROTHER'S WATER.

WHILE resting at the foot of Brother's Water, the day after he wrote the poem on the Daffodils, Wordsworth composed the following.

WRITTEN IN MARCH,

WHILE RESTING ON THE BRIDGE AT THE FOOT OF BROTHER'S WATER.

THE Cock is crowing,
The stream is flowing,
The small birds twitter,
The lake doth glitter,
The green field sleeps in the sun;
The oldest and youngest
Are at work with the strongest;
The cattle are grazing,
Their heads never raising;
There are forty feeding like one!

Like an army defeated
The snow hath retreated,
And now doth fare ill
On the top of the bare hill;
The Ploughboy is whooping—anon—anon:
There's joy in the mountains;
There's life in the fountains;
Small clouds are sailing,
Blue sky prevailing;
The rain is over and gone!

The view is taken from the top of Kirkstone Pass, with the Rock on the left,

"Whose church-like frame
Gives to this savage Pass its name."

The following is from Dorothy Wordsworth's diary. It records the walk from Ullswater, over Kirkstone Pass, to Ambleside:

"*Friday*, 16*th April* (*Good Friday*).

"When I undrew the curtains in the morning, I was much affected by the beauty of the prospect and the change. The sun shone, the wind had passed away, the hills looked cheerful. The river was very bright as it

flowed into the lake. The church rises up behind a little knot of rocks, the steeple not so high as an ordinary three-storey house; trees in a row in the garden under the wall. We set forward. The valley is at first broken by little rocky, woody knolls, that make retiring places, fairy valleys in the vale. The river winds along under these hills, travelling not in a bustle, but not slowly, to the lake. We saw a fisherman in the flat meadow on the other side of the water. He came towards us, and threw his line over the two-arched bridge. It is a bridge of a heavy construction, almost bending inwards in the middle; but it is grey, and there is a look of ancientry in the architecture of it that pleased me. As we go on the vale opens out more into one vale, with somewhat of a cradle bed. Cottages, with groups of trees on the side of the hills. We passed a pair of twin children two years old; sat, on the next bridge which we crossed, a single arch. We rested again upon the turf, and looked at the same bridge. We observed arches in the water, occasioned by the large stones sending it down in two streams. A sheep came plunging through the river, stumbled up the bank, and passed close to us. It had been frightened by an insignificant looking dog on the other side. Its fleece dropped a glittering shower under

its belly. Primroses by the roadside; pilewort that shone like stars of gold in the sun; violets, strawberries retired and half buried among the grass. When we came to the foot of Brother's Water, I left William sitting on the bridge, and went along the path on the right side of the lake through the wood. I was delighted with what I saw: the water under the boughs of the bare old trees, the simplicity of the mountains, and the exquisite beauty of the path. There was one grey cottage. I repeated the *Glow-worm* as I walked along. I hung over the gate, and thought I could have stayed for ever. When I returned, I found William writing a poem descriptive of the sights and sounds we saw and heard. There was the gentle flowing of the stream, the glittering, lively lake, green fields, without a living creature to be seen on them; behind us, a flat pasture with forty-two cattle feeding; to our left, the road leading to the hamlet. No smoke there, the sun shone on the bare roofs. The people were at work ploughing, harrowing, and sowing; lasses working; a dog barking now and then; cocks crowing, birds twittering; the snow in patches at the top of the highest hills; yellow palms, purple and green twigs on the birches, ashes with their glittering stems quite bare. The hawthorn a bright green, with black stems under

the oak. The moss of the oaks glossy. . . . As we went up the vale of Brother's Water, more and more cattle feeding, a hundred of them. William finished his poem before we got to the foot of Kirkstone."

No. XXIX.

KIRKSTONE PASS.

THIS is a view of Kirkstone Pass from the south, looking up to the Hawse, which divides the valleys of Stockghyll and Patterdale. The "kirk-stone" represented in the previous drawing is on the other side, to the left as one descends towards Brother's Water. Of the following poem Wordsworth said, it embodies "thoughts and feelings of many walks in all weathers, by day and night, over this pass, alone and with beloved friends."

THE PASS OF KIRKSTONE.

I.

WITHIN the mind strong fancies work,
A deep delight the bosom thrills,
Oft as I pass along the fork
Of these fraternal hills;
Where, save the rugged road, we find
No appanage of human kind,

Nor hint of man; if stone or rock
Seem not his handy-work to mock
By something cognisably shaped:
Mockery—or model roughly hewn,
And left as if by earthquake strewn,
Or from the Flood escaped:
Altars for Druid service fit:
(But where no fire was ever lit,
Unless the glow-worm to the skies
Thence offer nightly sacrifice)
Wrinkled Egyptian monument:
Green moss-grown tower; or hoary tent:
Tents of a camp that never shall be razed—
On which four thousand years have gazed!

II.

Ye plough-shares sparkling on the slopes!
Ye snow-white lambs that trip
Imprisoned 'mid the formal props
Of restless ownership!
Ye trees, that may to-morrow fall
To feed the insatiate Prodigal!
Lawns, houses, chattels, groves and fields
All that the fertile valley shields;

KIRKSTONE PASS.

Face p. 160.

Wages of folly—baits of crime,
Of life's uneasy game the stake,
Playthings that keep the eyes awake
Of drowsy, dotard Time ;—
O care ! O guilt !—O vales and plains,
Here, 'mid his own unvexed domains,
A Genius dwells, that can subdue
At once all memory of You,—
Most potent when mists veil the sky,
Mists that distort and magnify ;
While the coarse rushes, to the sweeping breeze,
Sigh forth their ancient melodies !

III.

List to those shriller notes !—*that* march
Perchance was on the blast,
When, through this Height's inverted arch,
Rome's earliest legion passed !
—They saw, adventurously impelled,
And older eyes than theirs beheld,
This block—and yon, whose church-like frame
Gives to this savage Pass its name.
Aspiring Road ! that lov'st to hide
Thy daring in a vapoury bourn,

Not seldom may the hour return
When thou shalt be my guide:
And I (as all men may find cause,
When life is at a weary pause,
And they have panted up the hill
Of duty with reluctant will)
Be thankful, even though tired and faint,
For the rich bounties of constraint;
Whence oft invigorating transports flow
That choice lacked courage to bestow!

IV.

My Soul was grateful for delight
That wore a threatening brow;
A veil is lifted—can she slight
The scene that opens now?
Though habitation none appear,
The greenness tells, man must be there;
The shelter—that the pérspective
Is of the clime in which we live;
Where Toil pursues his daily round;
Where Pity sheds sweet tears—and Love,
In woodbine bower or birchen grove,
Inflicts his tender wound.

—Who comes not hither ne'er shall know
How beautiful the world below ;
Nor can he guess how lightly leaps
The brook adown the rocky steeps.
Farewell, thou desolate Domain !
Hope, pointing to the cultured plain,
Carols like a shepherd boy ;
And who is she ?—Can that be Joy !
Who, with a sunbeam for her guide,
Smoothly skims the meadows wide :
While Faith, from yonder opening cloud,
To hill and vale proclaims aloud,
" Whate'er the weak may dread, the wicked dare,
Thy lot, O Man, is good, thy portion fair ! "

Miss Wordsworth thus describes a walk with her brother up Kirkstone Pass from Brother's Water, the day after the poem of *The Daffodils* was composed : " The walk up Kirkstone was very interesting. The becks among the rocks were all alive. William showed me the little mossy streamlet, which he had before loved when he saw its bright green track in the snow. The view above Ambleside very beautiful. There we sat, and looked down on the green vale. We watched the crows at a little

distance from us become white as silver as they flew in the sunshine, and when they went still farther they looked like shapes of water passing over the green fields."

The following extract from Wordsworth's *Description of the Scenery of the Lakes* is also illustrative of this and other poems :

"It has been said that in human life there are moments worth ages. In a more subdued tone of sympathy may we affirm, that in the climate of England there are, for the lover of nature, days which are worth whole months, —I might say—even years. One of these favoured days sometimes occurs in springtime, when that soft air is breathing over the blossoms and new-born verdure which inspired Buchanan with his beautiful *Ode to the First of May ;* the air, which, in the luxuriance of his fancy, he likens to that of the golden age,—to that which gives motion to the funereal cypresses on the banks of the Lethe ;—to the air which is to salute beatified spirits when expiatory fires shall have consumed the earth with all her habitations. But it is in autumn that days of such affecting influence most frequently intervene ;—the atmosphere seems refined, and the sky rendered more crystalline, as the vivifying heat of the year abates ; the lights and shadows are more delicate ; the colouring is

richer and more finely harmonized; and, in this season of stillness, the ear being unoccupied, or only gently excited, the sense of vision becomes more susceptible of its appropriate enjoyments. A resident in a country like this which we are treating of, will agree with me, that the presence of a lake is indispensable to exhibit in perfection the beauty of one of these days; and he must have experienced, while looking on the unruffled waters, that the imagination, by their aid, is carried into recesses of feeling otherwise impenetrable. The reason of this is, that the heavens are not only brought down into the bosom of the earth, but that the earth is mainly looked at, and thought of, through the medium of a purer element. The happiest time is when the equinoctial gales are departed; but their fury may probably be called to mind by the sight of a few shattered boughs, whose leaves do not differ in colour from the faded foliage of the stately oaks from which these relics of the storm depend; all else speaks of tranquillity;—not a breath of air, no restlessness of insects, and not a moving object perceptible—except the clouds gliding in the depths of the lake, or the traveller passing along, an inverted image, whose motion seems governed by the quiet of a time, to which its archetype, the living person, is, per-

haps, insensible :—or, it may happen, that the figure of one of the larger birds, a raven or a heron, is crossing silently among the reflected clouds, while the voice of the real bird, from the element aloft, gently awakens in the spectator the recollection of appetites and instincts pursuits and occupations, that deform and agitate the world,—yet have no power to prevent nature from putting on an aspect capable of satisfying the most intense cravings for the tranquil, the lovely, and the perfect, to which man, the noblest of her creatures, is subject."

No. XXX.

DUNGEON GHYLL.

EVERY visitor to the Lakes goes up Langdale, and all who go up Langdale visit Dungeon Ghyll. It is one of the best known of the localities associated with Wordsworth; and although his pastoral poem, *The Idle Shepherd Boys; or, Dungeon-Ghyll Force*, is not one of his greatest efforts, it has an interest of its own. The locality, the "chasm," with its "bridge of rock," and "basin black and small," have not changed since the beginning of the century, nor are they likely to change much in future years.

*THE IDLE SHEPHERD-BOYS; OR, DUNGEON-GHYLL FORCE.**

A PASTORAL.

THE valley rings with mirth and joy;
Among the hills the echoes play

* *Ghyll*, in the dialect of Cumberland and Westmorland, is a short and, for the most part, a steep narrow valley, with a stream running through it. *Force* is the word universally employed in these dialects for waterfall.—W. W.

A never never ending song,
To welcome in the May.
The magpie chatters with delight ;
The mountain raven's youngling brood
Have left the mother and the nest ;
And they go rambling east and west
In search of their own food ;
Or through the glittering vapours dart
In very wantonness of heart.

Beneath a rock, upon the grass,
Two boys are sitting in the sun ;
Their work, if any work they have,
Is out of mind—or done.
On pipes of sycamore they play
The fragments of a Christmas hymn ;
Or with that plant which in our dale
We call stag-horn, or fox's tail,
Their rusty hats they trim :
And thus, as happy as the day,
Those shepherds wear the time away.

Along the river's stony marge
The sand-lark chants a joyous song ;

The thrush is busy in the wood,
And carols loud and strong.
A thousand lambs are on the rocks,
All newly born! both earth and sky
Keep jubilee, and more than all,
Those boys with their green coronal;
They never hear the cry,
That plaintive cry! which up the hill
Comes from the depth of Dungeon-Ghyll.

Said Walter, leaping from the ground,
"Down to the stump of yon old yew
We'll for our whistles run a race."
——Away the shepherds flew;
They leapt—they ran—and when they came
Right opposite to Dungeon-Ghyll,
Seeing that he should lose the prize,
"Stop!" to his comrade Walter cries—
James stopped with no good will.
Said Walter then, exulting: "Here
You'll find a task for half a year.

"Cross, if you dare, where I shall cross—
Come on, and tread where I shall tread."

The other took him at his word,
And followed as he led.
It was a spot which you may see
If ever you to Langdale go ;
Into a chasm a mighty block
Hath fallen, and made a bridge of rock :
The gulf is deep below ;
And, in a basin black and small,
Receives a lofty waterfall.

With staff in hand across the cleft
The challenger pursued his march ;
And now, all eyes and feet, hath gained
The middle of the arch.
When list ! he hears a piteous moan—
Again !—his heart within him dies—
His pulse is stopped, his breath is lost,
He totters, pallid as a ghost,
And, looking down, espies
A lamb, that in the pool is pent
Within that black and frightful rent.

The lamb had slipped into the stream,
And safe without a bruise or wound

The cataract had borne him down
Into the gulf profound.
His dam had seen him when he fell,
She saw him down the torrent borne;
And, while with all a mother's love
She from the lofty rocks above
Sent forth a cry forlorn,
The lamb, still swimming round and round,
Made answer to that plaintive sound.

When he had learnt what thing it was,
That sent this rueful cry, I ween
The boy recovered heart, and told
The sight which he had seen.
Both gladly now deferred their task;
Nor was there wanting other aid—
A Poet, one who loves the brooks
Far better than the sages' books,
By chance had thither strayed;
And there the helpless lamb he found
By those huge rocks encompassed round.

He drew it from the troubled pool,
And brought it forth into the light;

The Shepherds met him with his charge,
An unexpected sight!
Into their arms the lamb they took,
Whose life and limbs the flood had spared:
Then up the steep ascent they hied,
And placèd him at his mother's side;
And gently did the Bard
Those idle Shepherd-boys upbraid,
And bade them better mind their trade.

Of this poem Wordsworth said: "When Coleridge and Southey were walking together upon the Fells, Southey observed that, if I wished to be considered a faithful painter of rural manners, I ought not to have said that my shepherd-boys trimmed their rustic hats as described in the poem. Just as the words had passed his lips, two boys appeared, with the very plant entwined round their hats."

No. XXXI.

BLEA TARN, FROM LINGMOOR.

It was in the little cottage near Blea Tarn, which lies at the western base of Lingmoor, between the two Langdale valleys, that "The Solitary" of *The Excursion* lived. In the Fenwick note to the poem, Wordsworth tells us: "I suppose that the pedlar and I ascended from a plain country up the vale of Langdale, and struck off a good way above the chapel to the western side of the vale. We ascended the hill, and thence looked down upon the circular recess in which lies Blea Tarn, chosen by the Solitary for his retreat." The hill is Lingmoor. The summit he described as a dreary plain,

> "With a tumultuous waste of high hill-tops
> Before us; savage region! which I paced
> Dispirited."

The "tumultuous waste of high hill-tops" refers, of course, to the range of Great End, Bowfell, Shelter Crags, Crinkle Crags, and Pike o' Blisco, to the west; the twin

peaks of Langdale, to the north, on the right; with Wrynose, Wetherlam, and the Coniston Mountains, to the south-west. They walked along the summit of Lingmoor,

> When, all at once, behold!
> Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,
> A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high
> Among the mountains; even as if the spot
> Had been from eldest time by wish of theirs
> So placed, to be shut out from all the world!
> Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn;
> With rocks encompassed, save that to the south
> Was one small opening, where a heath-clad ridge
> Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close:
> A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,
> A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,
> And one bare dwelling; one abode, no more!
> It seemed the home of poverty and toil,
> Though not of want: the little fields, made green
> By husbandry of many thrifty years,
> Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland house.
> —There crows the cock, single in his domain:
> The small birds find in spring no thicket there

To shroud them ; only from the neighbouring vales
The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill tops,
Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder place.

The Excursion, Book II.

The "little lowly vale" is the head of Little Langdale ; "urn-like," as seen from the top of Lingmoor ; the "one small opening" is the path into Little Langdale by Fell Foot and Busk ; the "nook" is not now "treeless," but the fir wood, on the western side of the vale, adds to its "quiet," and deepens the sense of seclusion ; the "liquid pool that glittered in the sun," is Blea Tarn ; the "one abode, no more," is the solitary cottage, now called Blea Tarn House ; and up to this retreat among the mountains the cuckoo still comes "from neighbouring vales."

Ah ! what a sweet Recess, thought I, is here !
Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease
Upon a bed of heath ;—full many a spot
Of hidden beauty have I chanced to espy
Among the mountains ; never one like this ;
So lonesome, and so perfectly secure ;
Not melancholy—no, for it is green,
And bright, and fertile, furnished in itself
With the few needful things that life requires.

—In rugged arms how softly does it lie
How tenderly protected ! Far and near
We have an image of the pristine earth,
The planet in its nakedness : were this
Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,
First, last, and single, in the breathing world
It could not be more quiet : peace is here
Or nowhere ; days unruffled by the gale
Of public news or private ; years that pass
Forgetfully ; uncalled upon to pay
The common penalties of mortal life,
Sickness, or accident, or grief, or pain.

The Excursion, Book II.

Wordsworth's minute and delicate characterization of the Blea Tarn Valley, in *The Excursion*, makes it the fittest guide to the district, apart from the lofty teaching of the third and fourth books. Any one who understands the poem, and then visits the place, will feel that its unique solitude, its upland peace,—with "the strength of the hills" all around—made it the fittest spot in Westmorland for these discourses of the Wanderer and his friends.

No. XXXII.

BLEA TARN, WITH THE LANGDALE PIKES.

In the second book of *The Excursion*, Wordsworth represents the Wanderer and himself as visiting "the Solitary," a recluse living in the cottage at Blea Tarn, where they carry on a varied conversational discussion on high themes of lasting human interest. They partake together of a rustic meal.

In genial mood,
While at our pastoral banquet thus we sate
Fronting the window of that little cell,
I could not, ever and anon, forbear
To glance an upward look on two huge Peaks,
That from some other vale peered into this.

"Those lusty twins," exclaimed our host, "if here
It were your lot to dwell, would soon become
Your prized companions.—Many are the notes
Which, in his tuneful course, the wind draws forth

From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores;
And well those lofty brethren bear their part
In the wild concert—chiefly when the storm
Rides high; then all the upper air they fill
With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow,
Like smoke, along the level of the blast,
In mighty current; theirs, too, is the song
Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails;
And, in the grim and breathless hour of noon,
Methinks that I have heard them echo back
The thunder's greeting. Nor have nature's laws
Left them ungifted with a power to yield
Music of finer tone; a harmony,
So do I call it, though it be the hand
Of silence, though there be no voice;—the clouds,
The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,
Motions of moonlight, all come thither—touch,
And have an answer—thither come, and shape
A language not unwelcome to sick hearts
And idle spirits:—there the sun himself,
At the calm close of summer's longest day,
Rests his substantial orb;—between those heights
And on the top of either pinnacle,
More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,

BLEA TARN. [*Face p.* 178.

Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.
Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man
Than the mute agents stirring there:—alone
Here do I sit and watch."

Of this passage, Mr. Stopford Brooke writes: "Mark how the wind rejoices in these peaks, and they give back its wild pleasure; how all the things which touch and haunt them get their reply; how they are loved and love; how busy are the mute agents there; how proud the stars to shine on them."

There can be little doubt that the "lusty twins" are the Langdale Pikes; although, if the three persons who there carry on their high discourse were really seated (as described) in the upper room of the little Blea Tarn Cottage they could not possibly see them; and to glance an "upward look" at them, while seated at the pastoral banquet was impossible—Side Pike and Pike o' Blisco alone being visible from the cottage window. But the realism of the narrative here gives way, and the Langdale "twins" are introduced, because they are the finest in the district, and are visible from spots quite near to Blea Tarn. "Let a man," wrote Dr. Cradock, "as he approaches Blea Tarn from Little Langdale, see these slowly rising, and peering

alone over the depression (or Hawse) which divides the Langdale valleys, and he cannot doubt that these are the 'lusty twins.' Let the Hawse be in shadow and the Pikes in sunlight, or the reverse, and the effect is one of the most striking in all the district."

XXXIII.

STICKLE TARN.

STICKLE TARN lies at the foot of a striking precipice, called Pavey Ark, which runs out a little to the north of Harrison Stickle, the smaller of the two Langdale Pikes. In the Fenwick note to the lines addressed *To Joanna*—one of the "Poems on the Naming of Places"—Wordsworth says: "The effect of the reverberation of voices in some parts of these mountains is very striking. There is, in *The Excursion*, an allusion to the bleat of a lamb, thus re-echoed and described without any exaggeration, as I heard it, on the side of Stickle Tarn, from the precipice that stretches on to Langdale Pikes." The following is the passage:

"The Soul ascends
Drawn towards her native firmament of heaven,
When the fresh eagle, in the month of May,
Upborne, at evening, on replenished wing,

This shaded valley leaves ; and leaves the dark
Empurpled hills, conspicuously renewing
A proud communication with the sun
Low sunk beneath the horizon ! List !—I heard,
From yon huge breast of rock, a voice sent forth
As if the visible mountain made the cry.
Again !"—The effect upon the soul was such
As he expressed : from out the mountain's heart
The solemn voice appeared to issue, startling
The blank air—for the region all around
Stood empty of all shape of life, and silent
Save for that single cry, the unanswered bleat
Of a poor lamb—left somewhere to itself,
The plaintive spirit of the solitude !

The Excursion, Book IV.

Farther on in the same book there is a similar passage, in which the spirit of the place is thus interpreted for us :

Has not the soul, the being of your life,
Received a shock of awful consciousness,
In some calm season, when these lofty rocks
At night's approach bring down the unclouded sky

To rest upon their circumambient walls ;
A temple framing of dimensions vast,
And yet not too enormous for the sound
Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst
Sublime of instrumental harmony,
To glorify the Eternal ! What if these
Did never break the stillness that prevails
Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,
And the soft woodlark here did never chant
Her vespers,—Nature fails not to provide
Impulse and utterance. The whispering air
Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights
And blind recesses of the caverned rocks ;
The little rills, and waters numberless,
Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes
With the loud streams ; and often, at the hour
When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,
Within the circuit of this fabric huge,
One voice—the solitary raven, flying
Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,
Unseen, perchance above all power of sight—
An iron knell ! with echoes from afar,
Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with which
The wanderer accompanies her flight

> Through the calm region, fades upon the ear,
> Diminishing by distance till it seemed
> To expire: yet from the abyss is caught again,
> And yet again recovered!

The following is from Dorothy Wordsworth's Grasmere Journal, July 26th, 1800: "After tea, we rowed down to Loughrigg Fell, visited the white foxglove, gathered wild strawberries, and walked up to view Rydale. We lay a long time looking at the lake. The shore all . . . with the scorching sun. The ferns were turning yellow—that is, here and there was one quite turned. We walked round by Benson's woodhouse. The lake was now most still, and reflected the beautiful yellow, and blue, and purple, and grey colours of the sky. We heard a strange sound in the Bainrigg's wood, as we were floating on the water. It seemed in the wood, but it must have been above it; for, presently, we saw a raven very high above us. It called out, and the dome of the sky seemed to echo the sound. It called again and again as it flew onwards, and the mountains gave back the sound, sending as if from their centre a musical bell-like answering to the bird's hoarse voice. We heard both the call of the bird, and the echo, after we could see him no longer."

In the Fenwick note to the *Evening Voluntary* beginning

"The leaves that rustled on this oak-crowned hill,"

Wordsworth says, "The mountains that inclose the vale (Grasmere) especially towards Easdale, are most favourable to the reverberation of sound"; and in that poem he refers to "the owlet's unexpected scream" piercing the "ethereal vault,"

"and (mid the gleam
Of unsubstantial imagery, the dream,
From the hushed vale's realities, transferred
To the still lake) the imaginative Bird
Seems, 'mid inverted mountains, not unheard."

No. XXXIV.

THE SUMMER-HOUSE, RYDAL.

THE winding terrace at the Mount led, as the Bishop of Lincoln described it, "to an arbour, lined with fir cones, from which, passing onwards, on opening the latch-door, we have a view of the lower end of Rydal Lake, and of the long, wooded, and rocky hill of Loughrigg, beyond and above it. Close to this arbour door is a beautiful sycamore, with five Scotch firs in the foreground, and a deep bay of wood, to the left and front, of oak, ash, holly, hazel, fir, and birch. The terrace path here winds off gently to the right, and becomes what was called by the poet and his household the Far Terrace, on the mountain side. . . . This terrace, after winding along in a serpentine line for about one hundred and fifty feet, ends at a little gate, beyond which is a beautiful well of clear water, called the 'Nab Well,' which was to the poet of Rydal—a professed water-drinker—what the Bandusian fount was to the Sabine bard."

Many poems were murmured out by Wordsworth while

pacing these terraces. The following—written in 1826—refers to his own share in shaping the "humble walk," leading to the Far Terrace beyond the summer-house.

The massy ways, carried across these heights
By Roman perseverance, are destroyed,
Or hidden under ground, like sleeping worms.
How venture then to hope that Time will spare
This humble Walk? Yet on the mountain's side
A POET'S hand first shaped it; and the step
Of that same Bard—repeated to and fro
At morn, at noon, and under moonlight skies
Through the vicissitudes of many a year—
Forbade the weeds to creep o'er its grey line.
No longer, scattering to the heedless winds
The vocal raptures of fresh poesy,
Shall he frequent those precincts; locked no more
In earnest converse with beloved Friends,
Here will he gather stores of ready bliss,
As from the beds and borders of a garden
Choice flowers are gathered! But, if Power may spring
Out of a farewell yearning—favoured more
Than kindred wishes mated suitably
With vain regrets—the Exile would consign

This Walk, his loved possession, to the care
Of those pure Minds that reverence the Muse.

With the summer-house is associated the poem entitled, *Contrast; the Parrot and the Wren.* The three following stanzas refer to the wren, of which in another poem, he says,—

> "The hermit has no finer eye
> For *shadowy quietness.*"

This moss-lined shed, green, soft, and dry,
Harbours a self-contented wren,
Not shunning man's abode, though shy,
Almost as thought itself, of human ken.

Strange places, coverts unendeared,
She never tried; the very nest
In which this Child of Spring was reared,
Is warmed, thro' winter, by her feathery breast.

To the bleak winds she sometimes gives
A slender unexpected strain;
Proof that the hermitess still lives,
Though she appear not, and be sought in vain.

No. XXXV.

RYDAL MOUNT.

In 1813 Wordsworth removed from the Parsonage, Grasmere, to Rydal Mount, which was his home till his death in 1850. The house and grounds are somewhat changed since then, but much remains unaltered. The view from the entrance gate, drawn by Mr. Goodwin, is nearly the same as it was of old. In 1851, when the poet's nephew—the late Bishop of Lincoln—wrote his *Memoirs*, he described the Mount somewhat minutely, as it then was. Looking from the "grassy mound"—which gave its name to the house,—he says:

"To the right, in the garden, is a beautiful glade, overhung with rhododendrons in most luxuriant leaf and bloom. Near them is a tall ash tree, in which a thrush has sung for hours together during many years. Not far from it is a laburnum, in which the osier cage of the doves was hung. Below, to the west, is the vegetable garden, not parted off from the rest, but blended with it by parterres of flowers and shrubs. Returning to the

platform of grey gravel before the house, we pass under the shade of a fine sycamore, and ascend to the westward by fourteen steps of stones, about nine feet long, in the interstices of which grow the yellow flowering poppy, and the wild geranium, or poor Robin,—

'—gay
With his red stalks upon a sunny day';

a favourite with the poet, as his verses show. The steps above mentioned lead to an upward-sloping terrace, about 250 feet long. On the right side it is shaded by laburnums, Portugal laurels, mountain ash, and fine walnut trees and cherries; on the left it is flanked by a low stone wall, coped with rude slates, and covered with lichens, mosses, and wild flowers. The fern waves on the wall, and at its base grow the wild strawberry and foxglove. Beneath this wall, and parallel to it, on the left is a level terrace, constructed by the poet, for the sake of a friend most dear to him and his, who, for the last twenty years of Mr. Wordsworth's life, was often a visitor and inmate of Rydal Mount. This terrace was the favourite resort of the poet, being more easy for pacing to and fro, when old age began to make him feel the acclivity of the other terrace to be toilsome."

RYDAL MOUNT. [*Face p.* 192.

The charm of Rydal Mount as a residence, though changed, is undiminished. Wordsworth himself wrote of "the beauty of the situation, it being backed and flanked by lofty fells, which bring the heavenly bodies to touch, as it were, the earth upon the mountain tops, while the prospect in front lies open to a length of lovely valley, the extended lake, and a terminating ridge of low hills."

Many poems are descriptive of the Mount, and of views in it or from it. On the lawn, sloping down to the kitchen garden, Wordsworth used to watch the dancing shadows amid "a press of sunshine," and it gave rise to the lines beginning,

"This lawn, a carpet all alive."

On that lawn was also suggested the quatrain he wrote in the album of his god-daughter, Rotha Quillinan, of which the last two lines were—

"The daisy, by the shadow that it casts,
Protects the lingering dewdrop from the sun";

while the magnificent *Evening Voluntary* was there "composed, on an Evening of extraordinary Splendour and Beauty."

No. XXXVI.

NAB WELL.

THIS well is referred to in the note to a previous drawing, No. XXXIV. In every walk taken from Rydal, by the upper path to Grasmere, this well was passed by Wordsworth, and he wrote of it,—

> How often I have marked a plumy fern
> From the live rock with grace inimitable
> Bending its apex toward a paler self,
> Reflected all in perfect lineaments—
> Shadow and substance kissing point to point
> In mutual stillness ; or, if some faint breeze,
> Entering the cell, gave restlessness to one,
> The other, glassed in thy unruffled breast,
> Partook of every motion, met, retired,
> And met again ! Such playful sympathy,
> Such delicate caress as in the shape
> Of this green plant had amply recompensed,

And hopeless pangs, the spirit of that youth,
The fair Narcissus, by some pitying god
Changed to a crimson flower . . .
For baffled life, and disappointed aims.

No. XXXVII.

DORA'S FIELD.

"RETURNING" (from the Nab Well), says the Bishop of Lincoln, "to the arbour, we descend, by a narrow flight of stone steps, to the kitchen garden; and, passing through it southward we open a gate, and enter a field sloping down the valley, and called, from its owner's name, 'Dora's Field.'" (Wordsworth purchased this bit of ground at a time when some doubt existed as to his being allowed to remain the tenant of "The Mount.") "Near the same gate we see a pollard oak, on the top of whose trunk may yet be discovered some traces of the primrose which sheltered the wren's nest.

> . . . She who planned the mossy lodge,
> Mistrusting her evasive skill,
> Had to a primrose looked for aid,
> Her wishes to fulfil.

"On the left of this gate we see another oak, and beneath

it a pool, to which the gold and silver fish, once swimming in a vase in the library of the house, were transported for the enjoyment of greater freedom.

> Removed in kindness from their glassy cell
> To the pure waters of a living well;
> An elfin pool, so sheltered that its rest
> No winds disturb."

No. XXXVIII.

A LEAFY BOWER, RYDAL.

The Cuckoo-clock, *The Redbreast*, *The Ode to Lycoris*, *The Sonnet to Wansfell*, *The Longest Day*, *The Lament of Mary Queen of Scots on the Eve of a New Year*, some of the *Evening Voluntaries*, and most of the *Evening Walk*,—and many other poems—are inseparably associated with the grounds of Rydal Mount. Amongst these *The Longest Day*—written in 1817, and suggested by seeing his daughter Dora playing in front of the house—may be quoted.

LET us quit the leafy arbour,
And the torrent murmuring by:
Sol has dropped into his harbour,
Weary of the open sky.

Evening now unbinds the fetters
Fashioned by the glowing light;
All that breathe are thankful debtors
To the harbinger of night.

Yet by some grave thoughts attended
Eve renews her calm career;
For the day that now is ended
Is the longest of the year.

Laura! sport, as now thou sportest,
On this platform, light and free;
Take thy bliss, while longest, shortest,
Are indifferent to thee!

Who would check the happy feeling
That inspires the linnet's song?
Who would stop the swallow, wheeling
On her pinions swift and strong?

Yet at this impressive season,
Words which tenderness can speak
From the truths of homely reason,
Might exalt the loveliest cheek;

And, while shades to shades succeeding
Steal the landscape from the sight,
I would urge this moral pleading,
Last forerunner of "Good night!"

Summer ebbs ;—each day that follows
  is a reflux from on high,
Tending to the darksome hollows
  Where the frosts of winter lie.

He who governs the creation,
  In His providence, assigned
Such a gradual declination
  To the life of human kind.

Yet we mark it not ;—fruits redden,
  Fresh flowers blow, as flowers have blown,
And the heart is loth to deaden
  Hopes that she so long hath known.

Be thou wiser, youthful maiden !
  And when thy decline shall come,
Let not flowers, or boughs fruit-laden,
  Hide the knowledge of thy doom.

Now, even now, ere wrapped in slumber,
  Fix thine eyes upon the sea
That absorbs time, space, and number ;
  Look towards eternity !

Follow thou the flowing river
On whose breast are thither borne
All deceived, and each deceiver,
Through the gates of night and morn;

Through the year's successive portals;
Through the bounds which many a star
Marks, not mindless of frail mortals,
When his light returns from far.

Thus when thou with Time hast travelled
Towards the mighty gulf of things,
And the mazy stream unravelled
With thy best imaginings;

Think, if thou on beauty leanest,
Think how pitiful that stay,
Did not virtue give the meanest
Charms superior to decay.

Duty, like a strict preceptor,
Sometimes frowns, or seems to frown;
Choose her thistle for thy sceptre,
While thy brow youth's roses crown.

Grasp it,—if thou shrink and tremble,
  Fairest damsel of the green,
Thou wilt lack the only symbol
  That proclaims a genuine queen;

And insures those palms of honour
  Which selected spirits wear,
Bending low before the donor,
  Lord of heaven's unchanging year!

No. XXXIX.

THE OLD PATH FROM RYDAL TO GRASMERE.

MANY poems were composed on that old pathway under Nab Scar, which is not much changed since Wordsworth's time. No track is more associated with him, not even the Lancrigg terrace-walk in Easdale. He thus refers to it in his poem of *The Clouds.*

> A humble walk
> . . . . . this path,
> A little hoary line and faintly traced,
> Work, shall we call it, of the shepherd's foot
> Or of his flock?—joint vestige of them both—
> I pace it unrepining, for my thoughts
> Admit no bondage, and my words have wings.

Being little used now-a-days, it still remains grassy in many places, with curves and windings and unexpected surprises; each turn of the road revealing a new grouping of the most characteristic features of mountain and valley. As it was while walking along this foot-road that the

Address to the Clouds was composed—while they were seen "driving over the top of Nab Scar, across the vale," —that poem is most naturally associated with the track itself.

TO THE CLOUDS.

ARMY of Clouds! ye wingèd Host in troops
Ascending from behind the motionless brow
Of that tall rock, as from a hidden world,
Oh, whither with such eagerness of speed?
What seek ye, or what shun ye? of the gale
Companions, fear ye to be left behind,
Or racing o'er your blue ethereal field
Contend ye with each other? of the sea
Children, thus post ye over vale and height
To sink upon your mother's lap—and rest?
Or were ye rightlier hailed, when first mine eyes
Beheld in your impetuous march the likeness
Of a wide army pressing on to meet
Or overtake some unknown enemy?—
But your smooth motions suit a peaceful aim:
And Fancy, not less aptly pleased, compares
Your squadrons to an endless flight of birds
Aërial, upon due migration bound

To milder climes : or rather do ye urge
In caravan your hasty pilgrimage,
To pause at last on more aspiring heights
Than these, and utter your devotion there
With thunderous voice ? Or are ye jubilant,
And would ye, tracking your proud lord the Sun,
Be present at his setting ; or the pomp
Of Persian mornings would ye fill, and stand
Poising your splendours high above the heads
Of worshippers kneeling to their up-risen god ?
Whence, whence, ye Clouds ! this eagerness of speed?
Speak, silent creatures.—They are gone, are fled,
Buried together in yon gloomy mass
That loads the middle heaven ; and clear and bright
And vacant doth the region which they thronged
Appear : a calm descent of sky conducting
Down to the unapproachable abyss,
Down to that hidden gulf from which they rose
To vanish—fleet as days and months and years,
Fleet as the generations of mankind,
Power, glory, empire, as the world itself,
The lingering world, when time hath ceased to be.
But the winds roar, shaking the rooted trees
And see ! a bright precursor to a train

Perchance as numerous, overpeers the rock
That sullenly refuses to partake
Of the wild impulse. From a fount of life
Invisible, the long procession moves
Luminous or gloomy, welcome to the vale
Which they are entering, welcome to mine eye
That sees them, to my soul that owns in them,
And in the bosom of the firmament
O'er which they move, wherein they are contained,
A type of her capacious self and all
Her restless progeny.

* * * * *

Where is the Orphean lyre, or Druid harp
To accompany the verse? The mountain blast
Shall be our *hand* of music; he shall sweep
The rocks, and quivering trees, and billowy lake.
And search the fibres of the caves, and they
Shall answer, for our song is of the Clouds,
And the wind loves them; and the gentle gales—
Which by their aid reclothe the naked lawn
With annual verdure, and revive the woods,
And moisten the parched lips of thirsty flowers—
Love them; and every idle breeze of air

Bends to the favourite burthen. Moon and stars
Keep their most solemn vigils when the Clouds
Watch also, shifting peaceably their place
Like bands of ministering Spirits, or when they lie,
As if some Protean art the change had wrought,
In listless quiet o'er the ethereal deep
Scattered, a Cyclades of various shapes
And all degrees of beauty. O ye Lightnings!
Ye are their perilous offspring : and the Sun—
Source inexhaustible of life and joy,
And type of man's far-darting reason, therefore
In old time worshipped as the god of verse,
A blazing intellectual deity—
Loves his own glory in their looks, and showers
Upon that unsubstantial brotherhood
Visions with all but beatific light
Enriched—too transient were they not renewed
From age to age, and did not, while we gaze
In silent rapture, credulous desire
Nourish the hope that memory lacks not power
To keep the treasure unimpaired. Vain thought!
Yet why repine, created as we are
For joy and rest, albeit to find them only
Lodged in the bosom of eternal things?

The walk under Nab Scar suggests two other poems —not in Wordsworth's happiest vein—*The Oak and the Broom*, and *The Waterfall and the Eglantine.* They are mentioned here because of his sister's reference to them in her *Journal.*

"*Friday, 23rd April,* 1802.

"It being a beautiful morning, we set off at 11 o'clock, intending to stay out of doors all the morning. We went towards Rydal, under Nab Scar. The sun shone, and we were lazy. Coleridge pitched upon several places to sit down upon; but we could not be all of one mind respecting sun and shade, so we pushed on to the foot of the Scar. It was very grand when we looked up, very stony; here and there a budding tree. William observed that the umbrella yew-tree that breasts the wind had lost its character as a tree, and had become like solid wood. Coleridge and I pushed on before. We left William sitting on the stones, feasting with silence, and I sat down upon a rocky seat, a couch it might be, under the Bower of William's *Eglantine, Andrew's Broom.* He was below us, and we could see him. He came to us, and repeated his Poems, while we sat beside him. We lingered long, looking into the vales; Ambleside Vale, with the copses, the village

under the hills, and the green fields; Rydale, with a lake all alive and glittering, yet but little stirred by breezes; and our own dear Grasmere, making a little round lake of Nature's own, with never a house, never a green field, but the copses and the bare hills inclosing it, and the river flowing out of it. Above rose the Coniston Fells, in their own shape and colour, . . . the sky, and the clouds, and a few wild creatures. Coleridge went to search for something new. We saw him climbing up towards a rock. He called us, and we found him in a bower,—the sweetest that was ever seen. The rock on one side is very high, and all covered with ivy, which hung loosely about, and bore branches of brown berries. On the other side it was higher than my head. We looked down on the Ambleside Vale, that seemed to wind away from us, the village lying under the hill. The fir-tree island was reflected beautifully. . . . About this bower there is mountain ash, common ash, yew tree, ivy, holly, hawthorn, roses, flowers, and a carpet of moss. Above, at the top of the rock, there is another spot. It is scarce a bower, a little parlour, not inclosed by walls, but shaped out for a resting-place by the rocks, and the ground rising about it. It had a sweet moss carpet. We resolved to go and plant flowers in both these places to-morrow."

No. XL.

RYDAL WATER.

THIS view of Rydal Water is taken from the south-eastern end of the lake, and includes the island, in which was *The Wild Duck's Nest*, Nab Cottage (where Hartley Coleridge used to live), and the path over White Moss Common by the Leech-gatherer's Pool to Grasmere.

Like a fair sister of the sky,
Unruffled doth the blue lake lie,
The mountains looking on.

Two of the *Evening Voluntaries* were "composed by the side of Rydal Mere." The former begins thus :

BY THE SIDE OF RYDAL MERE

THE linnet's warble, sinking towards a close
Hints to the thrush 'tis time for their repose ;
The shrill-voiced thrush is heedless, and again
The monitor revives his own sweet strain ;

But both will soon be mastered, and the copse
Be left as silent as the mountain tops,
Ere some commanding star dismiss to rest
The throng of rooks, that now, from twig or nest
(After a steady flight on home-bound wings,
And a last game of merry hoverings
Around their ancient grove), with cawing noise
Disturb the liquid music's equipoise.

The second is as follows:

SOFT as a cloud is yon blue Ridge—the Mere
Seems firm as solid crystal, breathless, clear,
And motionless; and, to the gazer's eye,
Deeper than ocean, in the immensity
Of its vague mountains and unreal sky!
But, from the process in that still retreat,
Turn to minuter changes at our feet;
Observe how dewy Twilight has withdrawn
The crowd of daisies from the shaven lawn,
And has restored to view its tender green,
That, while the sun rode high, was lost beneath
their dazzling sheen.
—An emblem this of what the sober hour
Can do for minds disposed to feel its power!

Thus oft, when we in vain have wished away
The petty pleasures of the garish day,
Meek eve shuts up the whole usurping host
(Unbashful dwarfs each glittering at his post)
And leaves the disencumbered spirit free
To reassume a staid simplicity.
'Tis well—but what are helps of time and place,
When wisdom stands in need of nature's grace;
Why do good thoughts, invoked or not, descend,
Like Angels from their bowers, our virtues to befriend;
If yet To-morrow, unbelied, may say,
"I come to open out, for fresh display,
The elastic vanities of yesterday"?

No. XLI.

THE SWAN INN, GRASMERE.

FROM the Swan Inn, Grasmere, Wordsworth, Southey, and Scott started to ascend Helvellyn together; and this old inn is associated with *The Waggoner's* famous drive from Rydal to Keswick over Dunmail Raise.

The place to Benjamin right well
Is known, and by as strong a spell
As used to be that sign of love
And hope—the OLIVE-BOUGH and DOVE;
He knows it to his cost, good Man!
Who does not know the famous SWAN?
Object uncouth! and yet our boast
For it was painted by the Host;
His own conceit the figure planned,
'Twas coloured all by his own hand;
And that frail Child of thirsty clay,
Of whom I sing this rustic lay,

Could tell with self-dissatisfaction
Quaint stories of the bird's attraction!

Well! that is past—and in despite
Of open door and shining light.
And now the conqueror essays
The long ascent of Dunmail Raise.

As he goes on, a storm gathers; and the Waggoner barely sees the rocks at the top of Helm Crag, where two figures seem to sit, like those on the summit of the Cobbler, near Arrochar, in Argyle.

The Astrologer, sage Sidrophel,
When at his desk and book he sits,
Puzzling aloft his curious wits;
He whose domain is held in common
With no one but the ANCIENT WOMAN,
Cowering beside her rifted cell,
As if intent on magic spell;—
Dread pair, that, spite of wind and weather,
Still sit upon Helm Crag together!

THE SWAN INN. [*Face p.* 218.

No. XLII.

WYTHEBURN.

AFTER the Waggoner crossed the ridge which divides the shires of Westmorland and Cumberland:

> That pile of stones
> Heaped over brave king Dunmail's bones;
> He who had once supreme command,
> Last king of peaky Cumberland,

he descended to

> Wytheburn's modest house of prayer,
> As lowly as the lowliest dwelling.

For a long time one of the very smallest churches in England, it has in recent years been enlarged, and an apse has been added to it. Mr. Goodwin's sketch is of the chapel of the Waggoner's time. It is at the base of Helvellyn; and the shortest of the three principal paths to the summit starts from it. Hartley Coleridge wrote of it thus:

Humble it is and meek and very low,
And speaks its purpose by a single bell;
But God Himself, and He alone, can know
If spiry temples please Him half so well.

No. XLIII.

THE ROCK OF NAMES.

LESS than a mile from Wytheburn, and a short way past the Cherry Tree public-house,—where the Waggoner found the inhabitants of the district assembled for a rustic dance, on their "village merry-night,"—the shore of Thirlmere was reached. Here "the Rock of Names" was passed, the trysting-place of the poets of Grasmere and Keswick. It was nearly half-way between the two places; and, when Coleridge lived at Keswick, he used often to cross to Thirlmere, while Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy, his brother John, his wife and wife's sister (Sarah Hutchinson) used to come from Grasmere, and spend the day together by the margin of the lake. They left a memorial of these delightful days in the living rock, which Wordsworth thus commemorated in a note to *The Waggoner*—

> An upright mural block of stone,
> Moist with pure water trickling down.

* * * * *

* * * * *

ROCK OF NAMES!

Light is the strain, but not unjust
To Thee, and thy memorial-trust
That once seemed only to express
Love that was love in idleness;
Tokens as year hath followed year
How changed, alas, in character!
For they were graven on thy smooth breast
By hands of those my soul loved best;
Meek women, men as true and brave
As ever went to a hopeful grave:
Their hands and mine, when side by side,
With kindred zeal and mutual pride,
We worked until the Initials took
Shapes that defied a scornful look.
Long as for us a genial feeling
Survives, or one in need of healing,
Thy power, dear Rock around thee cast,
Thy monumental power, shall last
For me and mine! O thought of pain,
That would impair it as profane!
And fail not thou, loved Rock! to keep
Thy charge when we are laid asleep.

It was during the summer of 1800 that these names were cut in the rock,—W. W., M. H., D. W., S. T. C., J. W., S. H. ;—the initials of William Wordsworth, Mary Hutchinson, Dorothy Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Wordsworth, and Sarah Hutchinson respectively. This meeting-place of the poets—they were all poets—will soon be beneath the waters of a Manchester reservoir. Application has been made to the corporation of that town to remove the rock—as uninjured as possible—to the side of the new roadway, which is to be made higher up the hill, by the side of this enlarged reservoir. As this is one of the localities associated with Wordsworth, which will soon be entirely changed, Mr. Goodwin's sketch of it, as it now is, will have more than ordinary value. Raven Crag, described in *The Waggoner*, is seen in the distance across the lake.

No. XLIV.

DERWENT-WATER.

THIS view of Derwent-water, from Friar's Crag, introduces the cataract of Lodore in the distance. The wooded island to the right is St. Herbert's Isle, where the Hermitage once stood, referred to in one of the *Inscriptions*.

FOR THE SPOT WHERE THE HERMITAGE STOOD ON ST. HERBERT'S ISLAND, DERWENT-WATER.

IF thou in the dear love of some one Friend
Hast been so happy that thou know'st what thoughts
Will sometimes in the happiness of love
Make the heart sink, then wilt thou reverence
This quiet spot; and, Stranger! not unmoved
Wilt thou behold this shapeless heap of stones,
The desolate ruins of St. Herbert's Cell.
Here stood his threshold; here was spread the roof
That sheltered him, a self-secluded Man.

After long exercise in social cares
And offices humane, intent to adore
The Deity, with undistracted mind,
And meditate on everlasting things,
In utter solitude. But he had left
A Fellow-labourer, whom the good Man loved
As his own soul. And, when with eye upraised
To heaven he knelt before the crucifix,
While o'er the lake the cataract of Lodore
Pealed to his orisons, and when he paced
Along the beach of this small isle and thought
Of his Companion, he would pray that both
(Now that their earthly duties were fulfilled)
Might die in the same moment. Nor in vain
So prayed he :—as our chronicles report,
Though here the Hermit numbered his last day
Far from St. Cuthbert his belovèd Friend,
Those holy Men both died in the same hour.

No. XLV.

THE RIVER GRETA.

WORDSWORTH lived for some time in the farmhouse of Windybrow, above the Greta, Keswick; and very frequently visited at Greta Bank, the home of Coleridge and of Southey. Amongst the poems relating to the Tour of 1833 are two sonnets which describe the Greta. The first is named—

TO THE RIVER GRETA, NEAR KESWICK.

GRETA! what fearful listening! when huge stones
Rumble along thy bed, block after block:
Or, whirling with reiterated shock,
Combat, while darkness aggravates the groans:
But if thou (like Cocytus from the moans
Heard on his rueful margin) thence wert named
The Mourner, thy true nature was defamed,
And the habitual murmur that atones
For thy worst rage, forgotten. Oft as Spring
Decks, on thy sinuous banks, her thousand thrones,

Seats of glad instinct and love's carolling,
The concert, for the happy, then may vie
With liveliest peals of birth-day harmony:
To a grieved heart, the notes are benisons.

The second is entitled—

NUN'S WELL, BRIGHAM.

THE cattle crowding round this beverage clear
To slake their thirst, with reckless hoofs have trod
The encircling turf into a barren clod;
Through which the waters creep, then disappear,
Born to be lost in Derwent flowing near;
Yet, o'er the brink, and round the limestone cell
Of the pure spring (they call it the "Nun's Well,"
Name that first struck by chance my startled ear)
A tender Spirit broods—the pensive Shade
Of ritual honours to this Fountain paid
By hooded Votaresses with saintly cheer!
Albeit oft the Virgin-mother mild
Looked down with pity upon eyes beguiled
Into the shedding of "too soft a tear."

Coleridge wrote thus to Sir Humphrey Davy, October 9th, 1800: "Fronting our house the Greta runs into the

Derwent. Greta, or rather Grieta, is exactly the Cocytus of the Greeks; the word, literally rendered in modern English, is 'the loud lamenter'; to griet, in the Cumbrian dialect, signifying to roar aloud for grief or pain: and it does *roar* with a vengeance!"

Wordsworth wrote, in 1835: "Many years ago, when I was at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, the mistress of the inn, proud of her skill in etymology, said, that 'the name of the river was taken from the *bridge*, the form of which, as every one must notice, exactly resembled a great A.' Dr. Whittaker has derived it from the word of common occurrence in the North of England, '*to greet*,' signifying to lament aloud, mostly with weeping: a conjecture rendered more probable from the stony and rocky channel of both the Cumberland and Yorkshire rivers. The Cumberland Greta, though it does not, among the country people, take up *that* name till within three miles of its disappearance in the river Derwent, may be considered as having its source in the mountain cove of Wytheburn, and flowing through Thirlmere, the beautiful features of which lake are known only to those who, travelling between Grasmere and Keswick, have quitted the main road in the vale of Wytheburn, and, crossing over to the opposite side of the lake, have proceeded with it on the right hand.

"The channel of the Greta, immediately above Keswick, has, for the purposes of building, been in a great measure cleared of the immense stones which, by their concussion in high floods, produced the loud and awful noises described in the sonnet."

"The scenery upon this river," says Southey in his *Colloquies*, "when it passes under the woody side of Latrigg is of the finest and most remarkable kind—

'Ambiguo lapsu refluitque fluitque
Occurrensque sibi venturas aspicit undas.'"

No. XLVI.

SKIDDAW.

ONE of the Sonnets is addressed to Skiddaw. In his poem, *At the Grave of Burns*, Wordsworth says :

> "Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
> By Skiddaw seen,—
> Neighbours we were, and loving friends
> We might have been."

And his sister Dorothy records in her Journal of the Scotch tour of 1803 : "*Aug. 18th.*—Went to the churchyard where Burns is buried. . . . I cannot take leave of the country which we passed through to-day without mentioning that we saw the Cumberland mountains, within half a mile of Ellisland, Burns' house, the last view we had of them."

> PELION and Ossa flourish side by side,
> Together in immortal books enrolled :
> His ancient dower Olympus hath not sold ;

And that inspiring Hill, which "did divide
Into two ample horns his forehead wide,"
Shines with poetic radiance as of old;
While not an English Mountain we behold
By the celestial Muses glorified.
Yet round our sea-girt shore they rise in crowds:
What was the great Parnassus' self to Thee,
Mount Skiddaw? In his natural sovereignty
Our British Hill is nobler far; he shrouds
His double front among Atlantic clouds,
And pours forth streams more sweet than Castaly.

This requires no comment. It may be interesting however to compare it with three prose descriptions of Skiddaw and the district around, the first by S. T. Coleridge, the second by Lamb, and the third by Southey.

COLERIDGE TO MR. PURKIS.

"GRETA HALL, KESWICK, CUMBERLAND.

"DEAR PURKIS,—

"I write to you from the *Leads* of Greta Hall, a Tenement in the possession of S. T. Coleridge, Esq., Gentleman —Poet and Philosopher in a mist. This Greta Hall is a House on a small eminence a furlong from Keswick, in the

County of Cumberland. Yes, my dear sir! here I am—with Skiddaw at my back—on my right hand the Bassenthwaite Water, with its majestic *Case* of mountains, all of simplest outline. Looking slant, direct over the feather of this infamous Pen, I see the Sun setting—My God! what a scene! Right before me is a great *Camp* of single Mountains—each in shape resembles a Giant's Tent! and to the left, but closer to it far than the Bassenthwaite Water to my right, is the lake of Keswick, with its islands and white sails, and glossy Lights of Evening, crowned with green meadows; but the three remaining sides are encircled by the most fantastic mountains that ever earthquakes made in sport; as fantastic as if Nature had *laughed* herself into the convulsion, in which they were made. Close behind me at the foot of Skiddaw, flows the Greta. I hear its murmuring distinctly—then it curves round almost in a semicircle, and is now catching the purple lights of the scattered clouds above it directly before me.

r r r is the river, and B my House.

"Till now I have been grievously indisposed—now I am enjoying the Godlikeness of the Place, in which I am settled, with the voluptuous and joy-trembling nerves of Convalescence. We arrived here last week—I was confined a fortnight at Grasmere—At Liverpool I was very much with Roscoe, a man of the most fascinating manners —if good sense, sweetness, simplicity, hilarity, joining in a literary man who is a good Husband, and the excellent Father of nine children, can give any man's manners the claim to that word.

"Sara Coleridge is well. . . . Hartley is all health and extacy. He is a Spirit dancing on an aspen leaf—unwearied in joy, from morning to night indefatigably joyous— —And how do you go on? and dear Mrs. Purkiss? and your little ones? Surely 'tis but a needless form for me to say, with what sincere exultation I should stretch out the right hand of fellowship to you, if chance or choice should lead you hither! I would I knew the spell that could force you. We have pleasant acquaintance here —and I shall have free access to the magnificent library of Sir Wilfred Lawson—yet you may well suppose, I did not quit Stowey without dejection, and that I cannot now think of Poole without a pang. Now, while I gaze, there is one dark slip of Cloud that lies across the bright Sun

on the Mountain Top !—and such, my dear Purkiss, is that thought to me.

"I have greatly regretted that my engagements in London prevented me from cultivating the acquaintance of Mr. Howard. I was exceedingly struck with him, and at that time and since have often wished for an opportunity of experimenting concerning the benefit which a Poet and Painter might mutually be of to each other's minds, if they were long together. When you see him, remember me to him expressly—and add, that if wearied with town or permitted by his occupations to leave it for a while, he should feel any inclination to see how nature [*some words cut away*] at once to gratify and baffle [*some words cut away*] Feeling, I have a plain table and a quiet room at his service for any length of time he can stay with me. In short I should be *very glad* to see him. Can't you come down together? Hang it—don't stand deliberating, but come.

"God bless you

"S. T. C.

"*Tuesday, July* 29, 1800."

In September, 1800, S. T. Coleridge wrote thus to William Godwin:

". . . The river Greta runs behind our house, and before it too, and Skiddaw is behind us, not half a mile distant, indeed, just distant enough to enable us to view it as a whole. The gardens, orchards, fields, and immediate country are delightful. . . . I know of no mountain in the north equal to Snowdon, but then we have an *encampment* of huge mountains, in no harmony perhaps to the eye of a scene-painter, but always interesting, various, and, as it were, nutritive. Height is assuredly an advantage, as it connects the earth with the sky by the clouds that are ever skimming the summits, or climbing up, or creeping down the sides, or veiling or bridging the higher parts or lower parts of the waterfalls. . . . Mountains and mountainous scenery put on their immortal interest first, when we have resided among them, and learned to understand their language, their written characters, and intelligible sounds, and all their eloquence, so various, so unwearied. Then you will hear no 'twice-told tale.' I question if there be a room in England which commands a view of mountains, and lakes, and woods, and vales, superior to that in which I am now sitting. I say this, because it is destined for your study, if you come. . . . Here too you will meet with Wordsworth, 'the latch of whose shoe I am

unworthy to unloose'" (*William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries*, vol. ii., pp. 7, 8).

LAMB TO MR. MANNING.

"*24th Sept.*, 1802, LONDON.

"MY DEAR MANNING,—

". . . I set out with Mary to Keswick, without giving Coleridge any notice, for, my time being precious, did not admit of it. He received us with all the hospitality in the world, and gave up his time to show us all the wonders of the country. He dwells upon a small hill by the side of Keswick, in a comfortable house, quite enveloped on all sides by a net of mountains: great floundering bears and monsters they seemed, all couchant and asleep. We got in in the evening, travelling in a post-chaise from Penrith, in the midst of a gorgeous sunshine, which transmuted all the mountains into colours, purple, etc., etc. We thought we had got into fairy land. But that went off (and it never came again; while we stayed we had no more fine sunsets); and we entered Coleridge's comfortable study just in the dusk, when the mountains were all dark with clouds upon their heads. Such an impression I never received from objects of sight

before, nor do I suppose that I can ever again. Glorious creatures, fine old fellows, Skiddaw, etc., I never shall forget ye, how ye lay about that night, like an intrenchment; gone to bed, as it seemed for the night, but promising that ye were to be seen in the morning. Coleridge had got a blazing fire in his study, which is a large, antique, ill-shaped room, with an old-fashioned organ, never played upon, big enough for a church, shelves of scattered folios, an Eolian harp, and an old sofa, half bed, etc. And all looking out upon the fading view of Skiddaw, and his broad-breasted brethren: what a sight!

"Here we stayed three full weeks, in which time I visited Wordsworth's cottage, where we stayed a day or two with the Clarksons (good people, and most hospitable, at whose house we tarried one day and night), and saw Lloyd. The Wordsworths were gone to Calais. They have since been in London, and past much time with us: he is now gone into Yorkshire to be married. So we have seen Keswick, Grasmere, Ambleside, Ullswater (where the Clarksons live), and a place at the other end of Ullswater; I forget the name;[1] to which we travelled on a very sultry day, over the middle of Helvellyn. We have clambered up to the top of Skiddaw,

[1] Patterdale.

and I have waded up the bed of Lodore. In fine, I have satisfied myself, that there is such a thing as that which tourists call *romantic*, which I very much suspected before; they make such a spluttering about it, and toss their splendid epithets around them, till they give as dim a light as at four o'clock next morning the lamps do after an illumination. Mary was excessively tired, when she got about half way up Skiddaw, but we came to a cold rill (than which nothing can be imagined more cold, running over cold stones), and with the reinforcement of a draught of cold water, she surmounted it most manfully. Oh, its fine black head, and the bleak air atop of it, with a prospect of mountains all about and about, making you giddy; and then Scotland afar off, and the border countries so famous in song and ballad! It was a day that will stand out, like a mountain, I am sure, in my life.

"But I am returned (I have now been come home near three weeks—I was a month out), and you cannot conceive the degradation I felt at first, from being accustomed to wander free as air among mountains, and bathe in rivers without being controul'd by any one, to come home and *work*. I felt very *little*. I had been dreaming I was a very great man. But that is going off, and I find I shall conform in time to that state of life

to which it has pleased God to call me. Besides, after all, Fleet Street and the Strand are better places to live in for good and all than amidst Skiddaw. Still, I turn back to those great places where I wandered about, participating in their greatness. After all, I could not *live* in Skiddaw. I could spend a year, two, three years among them, but I must have a prospect of seeing Fleet Street at the end of that time, or I should mope and pine away, I know. Still, Skiddaw is a fine creature. . . .

"Farewell, my dear fellow,

"C. LAMB."[1]

SOUTHEY TO C. W. W. WYNN, ESQ.

"KESWICK, *Aug. 23rd*, 1817.

" . . . Skiddaw is by much the most imposing mountain, for its height, that I have yet seen. Many mountains which are actually as high again from their base, do not appear to more advantage. I find here, as Wordsworth and Sir E. Beaumont had told me I should, the charm of proportion, and would not exchange Derwent-

[1] *The Letters of Charles Lamb.* By Thomas Noon Talfourd. Vol. i., pp. 221–226.

water for the Lake of Geneva, though I would gladly enrich it with the fruit trees and the luxuriant beauties of a Swiss summer." [1]

Again Southey writes, "summer is not the season for this country. Coleridge says, and says well, that then it is like a theatre at noon. There are no *goings on* under a clear sky; but at other seasons there is such shifting of shades, such islands of light, such columns and buttresses of sunshine, as might almost make a painter burn his brushes, as the sorcerers did their books of magic when they saw the divinity which rested on the apostles. The very snow, which you would perhaps think must monotonise the mountains, gives new varieties; it brings out their recesses and designates all their inequalities, it impresses a better feeling of their height, and it reflects such tints of saffron, or fawn, or rose-colour to the evening sun. *O Maria sanctissima!* Mount Horeb with the glory upon its summit might have been more glorious, but not more beautiful than old Skiddaw in his winter pelisse. I will not quarrel with frost, though the fellow has the impudence to take me by the nose. The lake-side has such ten thousand charms: a fleece of snow, or

[1] *Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey*, vol. iv., pp. 277, 278.

of the hoar frost, lies on the fallen trees or large stones; the grass-points, that just peer above the water, are powdered with diamonds; the ice on the margin with chains of crystal, and such veins and wavy lines of beauty as mock all art; and to crown all, Coleridge and I have found out that stones thrown upon the lake when frozen make a noise like singing birds, and when you whirl on it a large flake of ice away the shivers slide chirping and warbling like a flight of finches."

So far Southey's description of the Lake Country in early spring. The following is his account of it in autumn:

"The mountains on Thursday evening, before the sun was quite down, or the moon bright, were all of one dead-blue colour; their rifts and rocks and swells and scars had all disappeared—the surface was perfectly uniform, nothing but the outline distinct; and this even surface of dead blue, from its unnatural uniformity, made them, though not transparent, appear transvious—as though they were of some soft or cloudy texture through which you could have passed. I never saw any appearance so perfectly unreal. Sometimes a blazing sunset seems to steep them through and through with red light; or it is a cloudy morning, and the sunshine slants down through a rift in the clouds, and the pillar of light makes the spot

whereon it falls so emerald green, that it looks like a little field of Paradise. At night you lose the mountains, and the wind so stirs up the lake that it looks like the sea by moonlight."

No. XLVII.

SOUTHEY'S GRAVE.

In the constellation of "bright poetic stars" associated with the district of the English Lakes, Southey unquestionably takes rank after Wordsworth and Coleridge; and from his long connexion with Keswick, and that Greta Hall where Coleridge also lived, it is fitting that some memorial of him should find a place in this volume, and in these sketches. He was more the "man of letters" than the *vates*, the inspired poet of the district; but his blameless life, his patient years of indefatigable toil, reading, reviewing, assorting, correcting—years devoted to the honourable task of appraising the works of others, and producing works of his own, in so many different departments of literature, give him a unique place in the hierarchy of English writers. He lived far more in his library, in converse with the mighty dead through their books, than in the presence of Nature, taught by its voices or its silence. When he walked, it was for exercise, rather than for inspiration: and he liked to read while he walked

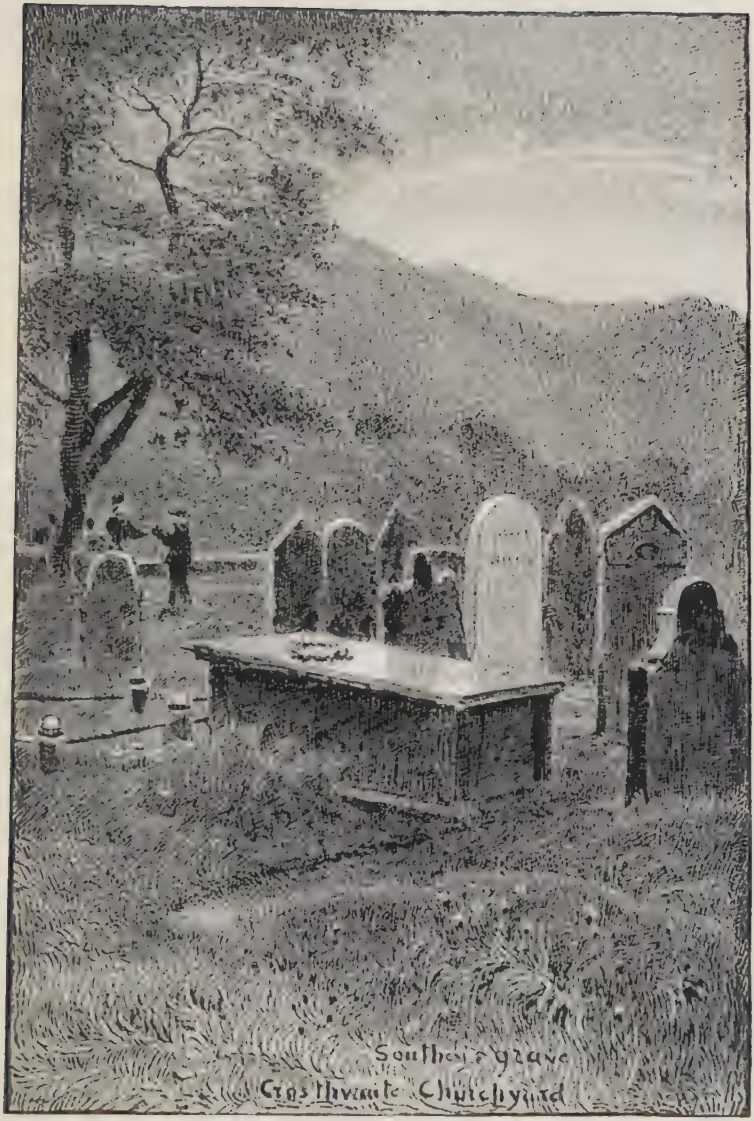
(that the time might not be wasted), rather than to converse with friends, or with the soul of Nature.

To him Wordsworth might have addressed his lines entitled *Expostulation and Reply:* and if he had ever said to his book-loving friend,

> "One impulse from a vernal wood
> Will teach you more of man,
> Of moral evil and of good,
> Than all the sages can,"

Southey would have replied—as a Scottish Rabbi of the last generation did,—"No, it won't! The sages are the teachers for me." In thinking of Southey, the picture that arises is that of the good, the true, the tenderhearted man; the unaffected, the industrious, the ever-generous friend; the soul that was clear as the sunlight, and transparent as a well; and the heart that craved more friendship than it ever got. It is thus that Carlyle wrote of him:

"I likened him to one of those huge sandstone grinding cylinders which I had seen at Manchester, turning with inconceivable velocity (in the condemned room of the iron factory, where 'the men die of lung disease at forty, but are permitted to smoke in their damp cellar, and think that a rich recompense!)—screaming harshly, and shooting out each of them its sheet of fire (yellow, star-



SOUTHEY'S GRAVE [*Face p.* 246.

light, etc., according as it is brass or other kind of metal that you grind and polish there)—beautiful sheets of fire, pouring out each as if from the paper cap of its low-stooping-backed grinder, when you look from rearward. For many years these stones grind so, at such a rate; till at last (in some cases) comes a moment when the stone's cohesion is quite worn out, overcome by the stupendous velocity long continued; and while grinding its fastest, it flies off altogether, and settles some yards from you, a grinding-stone no longer, but a cartload of quiet sand."

Southey is buried in Crosthwaite Churchyard, Keswick. Within the church a monument is erected in memory of him; and for that monument Wordsworth wrote the following inscription.

INSCRIPTION

FOR A MONUMENT IN CROSTHWAITE CHURCH, IN THE VALE OF KESWICK.

YE vales and hills whose beauty hither drew
The poet's steps, and fixed him here, on you
His eyes have closed! And ye, loved books, no more
Shall Southey feed upon your precious lore,
To works that ne'er shall forfeit their renown,
Adding immortal labours of his own—

Whether he traced historic truth, with zeal
For the State's guidance, or the Church's weal,
Or Fancy, disciplined by studious art,
Inform'd his pen, or wisdom of the heart,
Or judgments sanctioned in the Patriot's mind
By reverence for the rights of all mankind.
Wide were his aims, yet in no human breast
Could private feelings meet for holier rest.
His joys, his griefs, have vanished like a cloud
From Skiddaw's top; but he to heaven was vowed
Through his industrious life, and Christian faith
Calmed in his soul the fear of change and death.

Southey's son and biographer, the Rev. C. Cuthbert Southey, alludes to his father's burial thus: "It was a dark and stormy morning when he was borne to his last resting-place, at the western end of the beautiful churchyard of Crosthwaite. There lies his dear son Herbert, there his daughters Emma and Isabel—there, with his faithful helpmeet of forty years. But few beside his own family and immediate neighbours followed his remains. His only intimate friend within reach, Mr. Wordsworth, crossed the hills that wild morning to be present" (*Life and Correspondence*, vol. vi., p. 391).

Professor Dowden describes it thus: "On a dark and stormy morning Southey's body was borne to the beautiful churchyard of Crosthwaite, towards which he had long looked affectionately as his place of rest. There lay his three children, and she who was the life of his life. Skiddaw gloomed solemnly overhead. A grey-haired, venerable man, who had crossed the hills, stood there, leaning on the arm of his son-in-law; these two, Wordsworth and Quillinan, were the only strangers present, As the words, 'ashes to ashes,' were uttered, a sudden gleam of sunshine touched the grave; the wind dropped, the rain was over, and the birds had begun their songs of spring. The mourners turned away, thinking of a good man's life and death with peace—

'And calm of mind, all passion spent.'"

No. XLVIII.

THE BORROWDALE YEWS.

EVERY visitor to Keswick goes up Borrowdale; and on the way he passes several memorials of the poets—St. Herbert's Island, the "Floating Island" of Derwentwater, the Lodore Cascade, and Glaramara. Leaving the Honister road at Seatoller, the mountain track over the Sty Pass to Wastdale ascends under the flank of Greyknotts and Brandreth to Seathwaite; and there—to the left of the track, and a short distance from the Seathwaite beck—are the remains of a grove of Yew Trees, as famous as any in the kingdom. It is thus that Wordsworth wrote of them in 1803:

YEW-TREES.

THERE is a Yew-tree, pride of Lorton Vale,
Which to this day stands single, in the midst
Of its own darkness, as it stood of yore,
Not loth to furnish weapons for the bands
Of Umfraville or Percy ere they marched

To Scotland's heaths; or those that crossed the sea
And drew their sounding bows at Azincour,
Perhaps at earlier Crecy, or Poictiers.
Of vast circumference and gloom profound
This solitary Tree! a living thing
Produced too slowly ever to decay;
Of form and aspect too magnificent
To be destroyed. But worthier still of note
Are those fraternal Four of Borrowdale,
Joined in one solemn and capacious grove;
Huge trunks! and each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwisted fibres serpentine
Up-coiling, and inveterately convolved;
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane;—a pillared shade,
Upon whose grassless floor of red-brown hue,
By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged
Perennially—beneath whose sable roof
Of boughs, as if for festal purpose, decked
With unrejoicing berries—ghostly Shapes
May meet at noontide; Fear and trembling Hope
Silence and Foresight: Death the Skeleton
And Time the Shadow;—there to celebrate,
As in a natural temple scattered o'er

THE BORROWDALE YEWS (Face p. 252

With altars undisturbed of mossy stone,
United worship; or in mute repose
To lie, and listen to the mountain flood
Murmuring from Glaramara's inmost caves.

This grove of Yews in Borrowdale,—the "fraternal four"—a "brotherhood of venerable trees," remained uninjured till 1883—a natural temple, or, as described by Mr. Stopford Brooke, an "ideal grove, in which the ghostly masters of mankind meet and sleep and offer worship to the Destiny that abides above them, while the mountain flood, as if from another world, makes music to which they dimly listen." But in the great gale of December, 1883, one of them was uprooted, leading branches of the others were wrenched from the main stems; and although three still remain, the solemn majesty of the grove is gone. "Produced too slowly ever to *decay*," they have not proved of "aspect too magnificent to be *destroyed*." But—

Many hearts deplored
The fate of these old trees; and oft with pain
The traveller, to this day, will stop and gaze
On wrongs which Nature scarcely seems to heed.

Mr. Goodwin's sketch represents the grove as it was, before

this tornado shattered it. In *Modern Painters*, Mr. Ruskin speaks of "the high action of the imagination" in this poem, and says it is "perhaps the most vigorous and solemn bit of forest landscape ever painted."

No. XLIX.

THE LORTON YEW.

THIS Lorton Yew is described in the poem attached to the preceding drawing of the Borrowdale Grove. It is greatly reduced in size and majesty since Wordsworth wrote his poem, and is now very much of a ruin. Mr. Wilson Robinson, of Whinfell Hall, Cockermouth, wrote to me of it thus in May, 1880:

"The tree in outline expanded towards the root considerably; then, at about two feet from the ground, the trunk began to separate into huge limbs, spreading in all directions. I once measured this trunk at its least circumference, and found it 23 feet 10 inches. For the last fifty or sixty years the branches have been gradually dying on the south-east side, and about twenty-five years ago a strong south-east gale, coming with accumulated force down Hope Gill, and—owing to the tree being so open on that side—taking it laterally at a disadvantage, wrenched off one of the great side branches down to the

ground, carrying away nearly a third of the tree. This event led to further peril; for, the second portion having been sold to a cabinet-maker at Whitehaven for £15, this gave the impression that the wood was valuable (owing to the celebrity of the tree); and a local woodmonger bought the remainder. Two men worked half a day to grub it up; but a Cockermouth medical gentleman, hearing what was going on, made representations to the owner, and it ended in the woodmen sparing the remainder of the tree, which was not much the worse for what had been done. Many large dead branches have also been cut off, and now we have to regret that the 'pride of Lorton Vale,' shorn of its ancient dignity, is but a ruin, much more venerable than picturesque."

No. L.

THE PILLAR ROCK.

THE Pillar Rock in Ennerdale is associated with the poem of *The Brothers*. It has a certain fascination for the climber, as well as for the student of Wordsworth. "The homely priest of Ennerdale," speaking to the stranger Leonard, says of the brother who was killed by falling from the rock:

> One sweet May-morning,
> (It will be twelve years since when Spring returns)
> He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,
> With two or three companions, whom their course
> Of occupation led from height to height
> Under a cloudless sun—till he, at length,
> Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge
> The humour of the moment, lagged behind.
> You see yon precipice;—it wears the shape
> Of a vast building made of many crags;
> And in the midst is one particular rock

That rises like a column from the vale,
Whence by our shepherds it is called THE PILLAR.
Upon its aëry summit crowned with heath,
The loiterer, not unnoticed by his comrades,
Lay stretched at ease ; but, passing by the place
On their return, they found that he was gone.
No ill was feared ; till one of them by chance
Entering, when evening was far spent, the house
Which at that time was James's home, there learned
That nobody had seen him all that day :
The morning came, and still he was unheard of :
The neighbours were alarmed, and to the brook
Some hastened ; some ran to the lake ; ere noon
They found him at the foot of that same rock—
Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after
I buried him, poor Youth, and there he lies !

* * * * *

We all conjectured
That, as the day was warm, he had lain down
On the soft heath,—and, waiting for his comrades,
He there had fallen asleep ; that in his sleep
He to the margin of the precipice
Had walked, and from the summit had fallen headlong :

And so no doubt he perished. When the Youth
Fell, in his hand he must have grasped, we think,
His shepherd's staff; for on that Pillar of rock
It had been caught midway; and there for years
It hung;—and mouldered there.

This poem illustrates the way in which Wordsworth's imagination worked upon a minimum of facts, idealizing a simple story, and adding

"the gleam,
The light that never was on sea or land,
The consecration, and the poet's dream."

It is the only poem of his referring to Ennerdale; but perhaps the chief association with that dale, to those who visit it after becoming acquainted with this poem, will be the fact that the brothers Ewbank were supposed have to spent their youth under the shadow of the Pillar, and Leonard to have had this conversation, on his return from sea, with the venerable priest of Ennerdale. The district is described with all that local accuracy which Wordsworth invariably showed in idealization. The height whence James Ewbank is supposed to have fallen is not the Pillar Rock—a crag somewhat difficult to ascend except by practised climbers, and which has only been accessible

since mountaineering became an art and a passion to Englishmen. But if we suppose the conversation with the priest of Ennerdale to have taken place at the bridge, below the lake—as that is the only place where there is a hamlet and "a churchyard,"—the "precipice" will refer to the Pillar "*Mountain.*" Both are alluded to in the poem. The great mass of the Pillar Mountain is first referred to, and then the rock, which is a characteristic spur, halfway up the mountain on its northern side. The "airy summit crowned with heath," however, on which "the loiterer" "lay stretched at ease," could neither be the top of this "rock" nor the summit of the "mountain": not the former, because there is no heath on it, and it would be impossible for a weary man, loitering behind his companions, to ascend it to rest; not the latter, because no one resting on the summit of the mountain could be "not unnoticed by his comrades," and they would not pass that way over the top of the mountain 'on their return" to Ennerdale. This is an instance, therefore, in which precise localization is impossible. Probably Wordsworth did not know either that the Pillar "Rock" was bare on the summit, or that it was deemed inaccessible in 1800; and he idealized it to suit his imaginative purpose.

No. LI.

DUDDON VALLEY—COCKLEY BECK.

Mr. Goodwin gives four views in the Duddon Valley which are described in the "series of sonnets" written by Wordsworth in 1820. Of the fifth sonnet, describing Cockley Beck, Mr. Herbert Rix—who has made a very minute study of the topography of the valley, in connexion with the sonnets—says: "Here, as we emerge from Wrynose Bottom, the first 'trees' meet the eye, after a full two miles of monotony and stones; and here too is the first 'cottage,' where the 'ruddy children' of another generation 'sport through the summer day.' The cottage itself is not surrounded at the present time by 'sheltering pines.' . . . The pines may have disappeared since Wordsworth's day; or, more probably, one spot furnished him here, as in other poems, with the main idea, while accessory features were borrowed from other quarters, or created by the imagination."

Sole listener, Duddon! to the breeze that played
With thy clear voice, I caught the fitful sound

Wafted o'er sullen moss and craggy mound,
Unfruitful solitudes, that seemed to upbraid
The sun in heaven!—but now, to form a shade
For thee, green alders have together wound
Their foliage; ashes flung their arms around;
And birch-trees risen in silver colonnade.
And thou hast also tempted here to rise,
'Mid sheltering pines, this cottage rude and grey;
Whose ruddy children, by the mother's eyes
Carelessly watched, sport through the summer day,
Thy pleased associates;—light as endless May
On infant bosoms lonely nature lies.

No. LII.

THE FAERY CHASM.

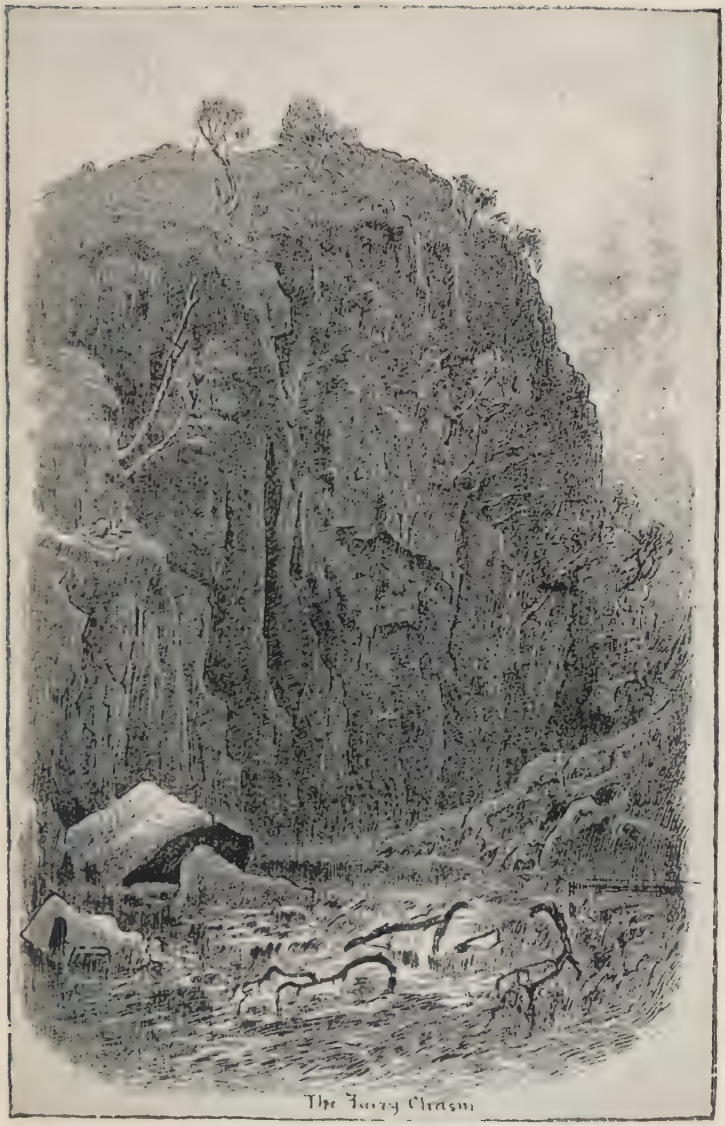
THE FAERY CHASM.

No fiction was it of the antique age ;
A sky-blue stone, within this sunless cleft,
Is of the very footmarks unbereft
Which tiny elves impressed ; on that smooth stage
Dancing with all their brilliant equipage
In secret revels—haply after theft
Of some sweet babe, flower stolen, and coarse weed left
For the distracted mother to assuage
Her grief with, as she might !—But, where, oh ! where
Is traceable a vestige of the notes
That ruled those dances, wild in character ?
Deep underground ?—Or in the upper air,
On the shrill wind of midnight ? or where floats
O'er twilight fields the autumnal gossamer ?

Mr. Rix says: "The 'Faery Chasm,' which has often caused perplexity, must be looked for, not below, but con-

siderably above Seathwaite, and is, in fact, the very next striking feature that occurs after the stepping-stones at Black Hall are passed. It is, I believe, the rocky gorge which is crowned by Birks Brig.

"The stream is here precipitated down a series of falls, and at the same time is forced into a much narrower channel than it has hitherto occupied. In its downward course, it is thrown from side to side in a series of rebounds, the effect being that the flood is churned into a mass of foam, while the rocks between which it is driven are scooped and chiselled into the most fantastic shapes—basins and niches, caverns and arches, and pillars with an odd spiral twist. Anything of a more elfin character could hardly be conceived"



THE FAIRY CHASM. [*Face p.* 264.

No. LIII.

NEAR THE PEN, DUDDON VALLEY.

OPEN PROSPECT.

HAIL to the fields—with dwellings sprinkled o'er,
And one small hamlet, under a green hill,
Clustered with barn and byre, and spouting mill!
A glance suffices;—should we wish for more,
Gay June would scorn us: but when bleak winds roar
Through the stiff lance-like shoots of pollard ash,
Dread swell of sound! loud as the gusts that lash
The matted forests of Ontario's shore
By wasteful steel unsmitten, then would I
Turn into port,—and, reckless of the gale,
Reckless of angry Duddon sweeping by,
While the warm hearth exalts the mantling ale,
Laugh with the generous household heartily
At all the merry pranks of Donnerdale!

O mountain stream! the shepherd and his cot
Are privileged inmates of deep solitude;
Nor would the nicest anchorite exclude

A field or two of brighter green, or plot
Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot
Of stationary sunshine :—thou hast viewed
These only, Duddon ! with their paths renewed
By fits and starts, yet this contents thee not.
Thee hath some awful spirit impelled to leave,
Utterly to desert, the haunts of men,
Though simple thy companions were and few ;
And through this wilderness a passage cleave
Attended but by thy own voice, save when
The clouds and fowls of the air thy way pursue !

This "open prospect" of fields, from a spot whence Seathwaite could also be seen, referred to in the first sonnet, could only be obtained from "The Pen," or "Pen Crag." The ruins of the "spouting mill," used of old for spinning yarn, are to be seen on the Tarn Beck, below Seathwaite chapel. The inn of Newfield,—"inn and farm combined" —is alluded to in the last lines of the sonnet.

The second sonnet was one of the earliest written in the Duddon series. It was published in 1807. More than one

plot
Of tillage-ground, that seemeth like a spot
Of stationary sunshine,

can be seen from "The Pen."

No. LIV.

DUDDON SANDS.

NOT hurled precipitous from steep to steep;
Lingering no more 'mid flower-enamelled lands
And blooming thickets; nor by rocky bands
Held; but in radiant progress toward the Deep
Where mightiest rivers into powerless sleep
Sink and forget their nature—*now* expands
Majestic Duddon, over smooth flat sands
Gliding in silence with unfettered sweep!
Beneath an ampler sky a region wide
Is opened round him:—hamlets, towers, and towns,
And blue-topped hills, behold him from afar;
In stately mien to sovereign Thames allied,
Spreading his bosom under Kentish downs,
With commerce freighted, or triumphant war.

"This sonnet was probably written from some rare vantage ground or view as is obtained of the last reaches of the Duddon,

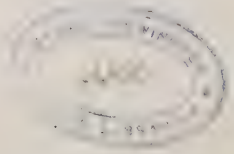
In radiant progress toward the Deep,

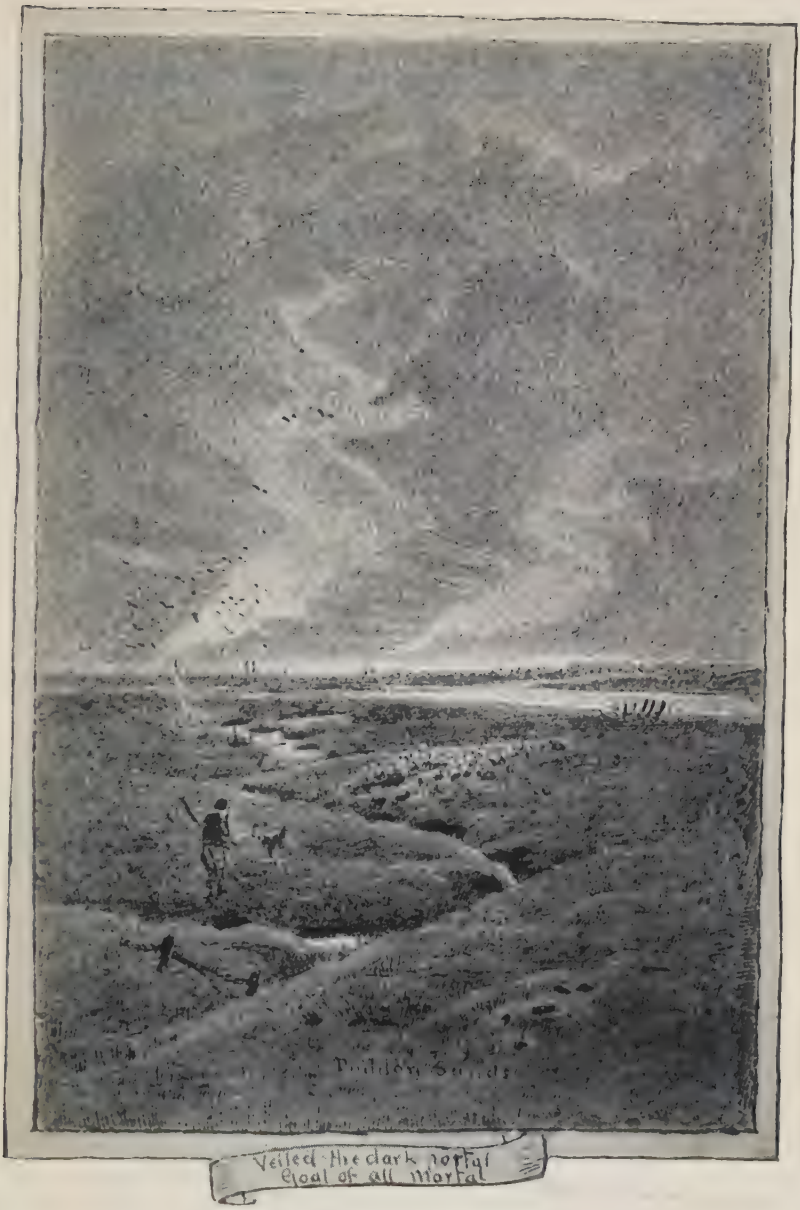
from the crest of a hill immediately above Broughton."

(Mr. Rawnsley.)

The volume may appropriately close with the *After Thought* to the whole series of Duddon Sonnets.

I THOUGHT of thee, my partner and my guide,
As being past away. Vain sympathies!
For, backward, Duddon! as I cast my eyes,
I see what was, and is, and will abide;
Still glides the Stream, and shall not cease to glide;
The Form remains, the Function never dies;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We Men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish; be it so!
Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live, and act, and serve the future hour;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent dower,
We feel that we are greater than we know.





DUDDON SANDS.

[*Face p.* 268